Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

# A SHORT HISTORY

OF THE

# ENGLISH PEOPLE.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

# A SHORT HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE.

BY

J. R. GREEN, M.A.

EXAMINER IN THE SCHOOL OF MODERN HISTORY, OXFORD.

WITH MAPS AND TABLES.

London:

MACMILLAN AND CO.

1874.

[*The Right of Translation and Reproduction is Reserved.*]

LONDON:
R. CLAY, SONS, AND TAYLOR, PRINTERS,
BREAD STREET HILL.

Digitized by Google

# PREFACE.

THE aim of the following work is defined by its title; it is a history, not of English Kings or English Conquests, but of the English People. At the risk of sacrificing much that was interesting and attractive in itself, and which the constant usage of our historians has made familiar to English readers, I have preferred to pass lightly and briefly over the details of foreign wars and diplomacies, the personal adventures of kings and nobles, the pomp of courts, or the intrigues of favourites, and to dwell at length on the incidents of that constitutional, intellectual, and social advance in which we read the history of the nation itself. It is with this purpose that I have devoted more space to Chaucer than to Cressy, to Caxton than to the petty strife of Yorkist and Lancastrian, to the Poor Law of Elizabeth than to her victory at Cadiz, to the Methodist revival than to the escape of the Young Pretender.

Whatever the worth of the present work may be, I have striven throughout that it should never sink into a "drum and trumpet history." It is the reproach of historians that they have too often turned history into a mere record of the butchery of men by their fellow-men. But war plays a small part in the real story of European nations, and in that of England its part is smaller than in any. The only war which has profoundly affected English society and English government is the Hundred Years' War with France, and of that

Digitized by Google

war the results were simply evil. If I have said little of the glories of Cressy, it is because I have dwelt much on the wrong and misery which prompted the verse of Longland and the preaching of Ball. But on the other hand, I have never shrunk from telling at length the triumphs of peace. I have restored to their place among the achievements of Englishmen the "Faerie Queen" and the "Novum Organum." I have set Shakspere among the heroes of the Elizabethan age, and placed the scientific inquiries of the Royal Society side by side with the victories of the New Model. If some of the conventional figures of military and political history occupy in my pages less than the space usually given them, it is because I have had to find a place for figures little heeded in common history —the figures of the missionary, the poet, the printer, the merchant, or the philosopher.

In England, more than elsewhere, constitutional progress has been the result of social development. In a brief summary of our history such as the present, it was impossible to dwell as I could have wished to dwell on every phase of this development; but I have endeavoured to point out, at great crises, such as those of the Peasant Revolt or the rise of the New Monarchy, how much of our political history is the outcome of social changes; and throughout I have drawn greater attention to the religious, intellectual, and industrial progress of the nation itself than has, so far as I remember, ever been done in any previous history of the same extent.

The scale of the present work has hindered me from giving in detail the authorities for every statement. But I have prefixed to each section a short critical account of the chief contemporary authorities for the period it represents as well as of the most useful modern works in which it can be studied. As I am writing for English readers of a general class I have thought it better to restrict myself in the latter case to English books, or to English translations of foreign works where they exist. This is a rule which I have only broken in the occasional mention of French books, such as those of Guizot or Mignet, well known and within reach of ordinary students. I greatly regret that the publication of the first volume of the invaluable Constitutional History of Professor Stubbs came

Digitized by Google

too late for me to use it in my account of those early periods on which it has thrown so great a light.

I am only too conscious of the faults and oversights in a work, much of which has been written in hours of weakness and ill health. That its imperfections are not greater than they are, I owe to the kindness of those who have from time to time aided me with suggestions and corrections; and especially to my dear friend Mr. E. A. Freeman, who has never tired of helping me with counsel and criticism. Thanks for like friendly help are due to Professor Stubbs and Professor Bryce, and in literary matters to the Rev. Stopford Brooke, whose wide knowledge and refined taste have been of the greatest service to me. I am indebted to the kindness of Miss Thompson for permission to use the Genealogical Tables prefixed to my work, and to Mr. Freeman for a like permission to use some of the maps in his "Old English History."

The Chronological Annals which precede the text will, I trust, be useful in the study of those periods where the course of my story has compelled me to neglect the strict chronological order of succession. In using this book as a school book, both teacher and scholar would do well to study them side by side with the text.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

# CONTENTS.


PAGE

CHRONOLOGICAL ANNALS . . . . . xiii—xxiv

GENEALOGICAL TABLES . . . . . xxv—xl

## CHAPTER I.

THE ENGLISH KINGDOMS, 607—1013.

Sect. 1.—Britain and the English . . . . . 1

,, 2.—The English Conquest, 449-607 . . . . . 7

,, 3.—The Northumbrian Overlordship, 607—685 . . . . . 16

,, 4.—The Overlordship of Mercia, 685—823 . . . . . 34

,, 5.—Wessex and the Danes, 800—880 . . . . . 42

,, 6.—The West-Saxon Kingdom, 892—1013 . . . . . 49

## CHAPTER II.

ENGLAND UNDER FOREIGN KINGS, 1013—1204.

Sect. 1.—The Danish Kings . . . . . 59

,, 2.—The English Restoration, 1042—1066 . . . . . 63

,, 3.—Normandy and the Normans, 912—1066 . . . . . 67

,, 4.—The Conqueror, 1042—1066 . . . . . 70

,, 5.—The Norman Conquest, 1068—1071 . . . . . 78

,, 6.—The English Revival, 1071—1127 . . . . . 84

,, 7.—England and Anjou, 870—1154 . . . . . 94

,, 8.—Henry the Second, 1154—1189 . . . . . 100

,, 9.—The fall of the Angevins, 1189—1204. . . . . 108


Digitized by Google

## CHAPTER III.

### THE GREAT CHARTER, 1204—1265.

PAGE

Sect. 1.—English Literature under the Norman and Angevin Kings . . . 113
,, 2.—John, 1204—1215 . . . . . 118
,, 3.—The Great Charter, 1215—1217 . . . . . 123
,, 4.—The Universities . . . . . 127
,, 5.—Henry the Third, 1217—1257 . . . . . 137
,, 6.—The Friars . . . . . 143
,, 7.—The Barons' War, 1258—1265 . . . . . 147

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE THREE EDWARDS, 1265—1360.

Sect. 1.—The Conquest of Wales, 1265—1284 . . . . . 155
,, 2.—The English Parliament, 1283—1295 . . . . . 163
,, 3.—The Conquest of Scotland, 1290—1305 . . . . . 175
,, 4.—The English Town . . . . . 187
,, 5.—The King and the Baronage, 1290—1327 . . . . . 195
,, 6.—The Scotch War of Independence, 1306—1342 . . . . . 204

## CHAPTER V.

### THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR, 1336—1431.

Sect. 1.—Edward the Third, 1336—1360 . . . . . 211
,, 2.—The Good Parliament, 1360—1377 . . . . . 224
,, 3.—John Wyclif . . . . . 228
,, 4.—The Peasant Revolt, 1377—1381 . . . . . 237
,, 5.—Richard the Second, 1381—1399 . . . . . 248
,, 6.—The House of Lancaster, 1399—1422 . . . . . 258

Digitized by Google

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE NEW MONARCHY, 1422—1540.

PAGE

Sect. 1.—Joan of Arc, 1422—1451 . . . . . 265
,, 2.—The Wars of the Roses, 1450—1471 . . . . . 275
,, 3.—The New Monarchy, 1471—1509 . . . . . 282
,, 4.—The New Learning, 1509—1520 . . . . . 297
,, 5.—Wolsey, 1515—1531 . . . . . 314
,, 6.—Thomas Cromwell, 1530—1540 . . . . . 324

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE REFORMATION.

Sect. 1.—The Protestants, 1540—1553 . . . . . 340
,, 2.—The Martyrs, 1553—1558 . . . . . 353
,, 3.—Elizabeth, 1558—1560 . . . . . 361
,, 4.—England and Mary Stuart, 1560—1572 . . . . . 375
,, 5.—The England of Elizabeth . . . . . 384
,, 6.—The Armada, 1572—1588 . . . . . 398
,, 7.—The Elizabethan Poets . . . . . 412
,, 8.—The Conquest of Ireland, 1588—1610 . . . . . 429

## CHAPTER VIII.

### PURITAN ENGLAND.

Sect. 1.—The Puritans, 1583—1603 . . . . . 447
,, 2.—The First of the Stuarts, 1604—1623 . . . . . 461
,, 3.—The King and the Parliament, 1623—1629 . . . . . 478
,, 4.—New England . . . . . 490
,, 5.—The Tyranny, 1629—1640 . . . . . 499
,, 6.—The Long Parliament, 1640—1644 . . . . . 518
,, 7.—The Civil War, July 1642—August 1646 . . . . . 530
,, 8.—The Army and the Parliament, 1646—1649 . . . . . 542
,, 9.—The Commonwealth, 1649—1653 . . . . . 554
,, 10.—The Fall of Puritanism, 1653—1660 . . . . . 564

Digitized by Google

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE REVOLUTION.

PAGE

Sect. 1.—England and the Revolution . . . . . 587
,, 2.—The Restoration, 1660—1667 . . . . . 604
,, 3.—Charles the Second, 1667—1673 . . . . . 616
,, 4.—Danby, 1673—1678 . . . . . 628
,, 5.—Shaftesbury, 1679—1682 . . . . . 638
,, 6.—The Second Stuart Tyranny, 1682—1688 . . . . . 646
,, 7.—William of Orange . . . . . 657
,, 8.—The Grand Alliance, 1689—1694 . . . . . 668
,, 9.—Marlborough, 1698—1712 . . . . . 684
,, 10.—Walpole, 1712—1742 . . . . . 701

## CHAPTER X.

### MODERN ENGLAND.

Sect. 1.—William Pitt, 1742—1762 . . . . . 716
,, 2.—The Independence of America, 1761—1785 . . . . . 737
,, 3.—The Second Pitt, 1783—1789 . . . . . 762
,, 4.—The War with France, 1793—1815 . . . . . 783
Epilogue, 1815-1873 . . . . . 812

## LIST OF MAPS.

1. Britain in the midst of the English Conquest . . . . . 10
2. England in the Ninth Century . . . . . 42
3. Empire of the Angevins . . . . . 100
4. France at the Treaty of Bretigny . . . . . 211
5. The American Colonies in 1640 . . . . . 491

Digitized by Google

# CHRONOLOGICAL ANNALS

OF

# ENGLISH HISTORY.

## THE ENGLISH KINGDOMS.

**449—1016.**

**449** **English land in Britain.**
457 Kent conquered by English.
477 Landing of South Saxons.
495 Landing of West Saxons.
520 British victory at Mount Badon.
547 Ida founds Kingdom of Bernicia.
552 West Saxons take Old Sarum.
565 **Æthelberht,** King of Kent, died 616.
568 —— driven back by West Saxons.
571 West Saxons march into Mid-Britain.
577 —— conquer at Deorham.
593 **Æthelfrith** creates Kingdom of Northumbria, died 617.
597 West Saxons defeated at Fethanlea.
*Augustine converts Kent.*
603 Battle of Dægsastan.
607 Battle of Chester.
617 **Eadwine,** King of Northumbria, died 633.
626 —— overlord of Britain.
627 —— becomes Christian.
633 —— slain at Hatfield.
635 **Oswald,** King of Northumbria, died 642.
—— defeats Welsh at Hevenfeld.
636 *Aidan settles at Holy Island.*
639 Conversion of Wessex.
642 Oswald slain at Maserfeld.
655 **Oswi,** King of Northumbria, died 670.
—— Victory at Winwœd.
657 Wulfere King in Mercia.
658 West Saxons conquer as far as the Parret.
664 Council of Whitby.
*Cædmon at Whitby.*
668 Theodore made Archbishop of Canterbury.
670 **Egfrith,** King of Northumbria, died 685.
676 Wulfere drives West Saxons over Thames.
681 Wilfrid converts South Saxons.
682 Centwine of Wessex conquers Mid-Somerset.
685 Egfrith defeated and slain at Nechtansmere.
688 **Ini,** King of West Saxons, died 726.
705 Northumbrian conquest of Strathclyde.
714 Ini defeats Ceolred of Mercia at Wodnesborough.
716 **Æthelbald,** King of Mercia, died 755.
733 Mercian conquest of Wessex.
752 Wessex recovers freedom in battle of Burford.
755 *Deaths of Bæda and Boniface.*
756 Eadberht of Northumbria takes Alcluyd.
758 **Offa,** King of Mercia, died 794.
773 —— subdues Kentish men at Otford.
777 —— defeats West Saxons at Bensington.
784 —— places Brightric on throne of Wessex.
786 —— creates Archbishopric at Lichfield.
787 First landing of Danes in England.
794 **Cenwulf,** King of Mercia, died 819.
—— suppresses Archbishopric of Lichfield.
800 **Ecgberht,** becomes King in Wessex, died 836.

Digitized by Google

**808** Charles the Great restores Eardwulf in Northumbria.
**813** Ecgberht subdues the West Welsh to the Tamar.
**822** Civil war in Mercia.
**823** Ecgberht defeats Mercians at Ellandune.
Ecgberht overlord of England south of Thames.
**824** Revolt of East Anglia against Mercia.
**825** Defeat of Mercians by East Anglians.
**827** Mercia and Northumbria submit to Ecgberht.
Ecgberht, overlord of all English kingdoms.
**828** —— invades Wales.
**835** —— defeats Danes at Hengestesdun.
**836** **Æthelwulf,** King of Wessex, died 858.
**849** Ælfred born.
**851** Danes defeated at Aclea.
**853** Ælfred sent to Rome.
**855** Æthelwulf goes to Rome.
**858** **Æthelbald,** King of Wessex, died 860.
**860** **Æthelberht,** King of Wessex, died 866.
**866** **Æthelred,** King of Wessex, died 871.
**867** Danes conquer Northumbria.
**868** Peace of Nottingham with Danes.
**870** Danes conquer and settle in East Anglia.
**871** Danes invade Wessex.
**Ælfred,** King of Wessex, died 901.
**874** Danes conquer Mercia.
**876** Danes settle in Northumbria.
**877** Ælfred defeats Danes at Exeter.
**878** Danes overrun Wessex.
Ælfred victor at Edington.
Peace of Wedmore.
**883** Ælfred sends envoys to Rome and India.
**886** —— takes and refortifies London.
**893** Danes reappear in Thames and Kent.
**894** Ælfred drives Hasting from Wessex.
**895** Hasting invades Mercia.
**896** Ælfred drives Danes from Essex.
**897** Hasting quits England.
Ælfred creates a fleet.
**901** **Eadward the Elder,** died 925.
**912** Northmen settle in Normandy.
**913–918** Æthelflæd conquers Danish Mercia.
**921** Eadward subdues East Anglia and Essex.
**924** —— owned as overlord by Northumbria, Scots, and Strathclyde.
**925** **Æthelstan,** died 940.
**926** —— drives Welsh from Exeter.
**934** —— invades Scotland.
**937** Victory of Brunanburh.
**940** **Eadmund,** died 947.
**943** Dunstan made Abbot of Glastonbury.
**945** Cumberland granted to Malcolm, King of Scots.
**947** **Eadred,** died 955.
**954** —— makes Northumbria an Earldom.
**955** **Eadwig,** died 957.
**956** Banishment of Dunstan.
**957** Revolt of Mercia under Eadgar.
**958** **Eadgar,** died 975.
**961** Dunstan Archbishop of Canterbury.
**975** **Eadward the Martyr,** died 975.
**979** **Æthelred the Unready,** died 1016.
**980** Mercia and Northumbria part from Wessex.
**987–1040** Fulc the Black, Count of Anjou.
**994** Invasion of Swegen.
**1002** Massacre of Danes.
**1003** Swegen harries Wessex.
**1012** Murder of Archbishop Ælfeah.
**1013** All England submits to Swegen.
**1014** Flight of Æthelred to Normandy.
**1016** **Eadmund Ironside,** King, and dies.

## ENGLAND UNDER FOREIGN KINGS.

### 1017—1204.

**1017** **Cnut,** King, died 1035.
**1020** Godwine made Earl of Wessex.
**1027** Cnut goes to Rome.
Birth of William of Normandy.
**1035** Harold and Harthacnut divide England.
**1037** **Harold,** King, died 1040.
**1040** **Harthacnut,** King, died 1042.
**1042** **Eadward the Confessor,** died 1065.
**1044–1060** Geoffry Martel, Count of Anjou.
**1045** *Lanfranc at Bec.*
**1047** Victory of William at Val-ès-dunes.
**1051** Banishment of Godwine.
**1052** William of Normandy visits England.
Return and death of Godwine.
**1053** Harold made Earl of West-Saxons
**1054** William's victory at Mortemer.
**1055** Harold's first campaign in Wales.
**1054–1060** Norman conquest of southern Italy
**1058** William's victory at the Dive.
**1060** Normans invade Sicily.
**1063** Harold conquers Wales.
**1066** **Harold,** King.
—— conquers at Stamford Bridge.
—— defeated at Senlac or Hastings.

Digitized by Google

**1066** **William** of Normandy, King, died 1087.
**1068**
**1071** Norman Conquest of England.
**1070** Reorganization of the Church.
**1075** Rising of Roger Fitz-Osbern.
**1081** William invades Wales.
**1085** Failure of Danish invasion
**1086** Completion of Domesday Book.
**1087** **William the Red,** died 1100.
**1093** *Anselm, Archbishop.*
**1094** Revolt of Wales against the Norman Marchers.
**1096** Revolt of Robert de Mowbray.
Normandy left in pledge to William.
**1097** William invades Wales.
Anselm leaves England.
**1098** War with France.
**1100** **Henry the First,** died 1135.
Henry's Charter.
**1101** William of Normandy invades England.
**1106** Settlement of question of investitures.
English Conquest of Normandy.
**1109**
**1129** Fulc of Jerusalem, Count of Anjou.
**1109** War with France.
**1111** War with Anjou.
**1113** Peace of Gisors.
**1114** Marriage of Matilda with Henry V.
**1118** Revolt of Norman baronage.
**1120** Wreck of White Ship.
**1122** Henry's campaign in Wales.
**1124** France and Anjou support William Clito.
**1127** Matilda married to Geoffry of Anjou.
**1128** Death of the Clito in Flanders.
**1134** Revolt of Wales.
**1135** **Stephen** of Blois, died 1154.
**1137** Normandy repulses the Angevins.
**1137** Revolt of Earl Robert.
**1138** Battle of the Standard.
**1139** Seizure of the Bishops.
**1141** Battle of Lincoln.
**1147** Matilda withdraws to Normandy.
**1148** Henry of Anjou in England.
Archbishop Theobald driven into exile.
**1151** Henry becomes Duke of Normandy.
**1152** Henry marries Eleanor of Guienne.
**1153** Henry in England. Treaty of Wallingford.
**1154** **Henry the Second,** died 1189.
**1160** Expedition against Toulouse.
The Great Scutage.
**1162** Thomas made Archbishop of Canterbury.
**1164** Constitutions of Clarendon.
Flight of Archbishop Thomas.
**1166** Assize of Clarendon.
**1169** Strongbow's invasion of Ireland.
**1170** Death of Archbishop Thomas.
Inquest of Sheriffs.
**1174** Rebellion of Henry's sons.
**1176** Assize of Northampton.
**1178** Reorganization of Curia Regis.
**1181** Assize of Arms.
**1189** Revolt of Richard.
**Richard the First,** died 1199.
**1190**
**1194** Richard's Crusade.
**1194**
**1196** War with Philip Augustus.
**1195**
**1246** Llewellyn Ap-Jorwerth in North Wales.
**1197** Richard builds Château Gaillard.
**1199** **John,** dies 1216.
**1200** —— recovers Anjou and Maine.
*Layamon writes the Brut.*
**1203** Murder of Arthur.
**1204** French conquest of Anjou and Normandy.

## THE GREAT CHARTER.

### 1204—1295.

**1205** Barons refuse to fight for recovery of Normandy.
**1208** Innocent III. puts England under Interdict.
**1211** John reduces Llewellyn-ap-Jorwerth to submission.
**1212** John divides Irish Pale into counties.
**1213** John becomes the Pope's vassal.
**1214** Battle of Bouvines.
*Birth of Roger Bacon.*
**1215** The Great Charter.
**1216** Lewis of France called in by the Barons.
**Henry the Third,** died 1273.
Confirmation of the Charter.
**217** Lewis returns to France.
**1217** Hubert de Burgh, Justiciary.
Charter again confirmed.
**1221** *Friars land in England.*
**1223** Charter again confirmed at Oxford.
**1225** Irish confirmation of Charter.
**1228** Revolt of Faukes de Breauté.
Stephen Langton's death.
**1229** Papal exactions.
**1230** Failure of Henry's campaign in Poitou.
**1231** Conspiracy against the Italian clergy.
**1232** Fall of Hubert de Burgh.
**1237** Charter again confirmed.
**1238** Earl Simon of Leicester marries Henry's sister.
**1241** Defeat of Henry at Taillebourg.

Digitized by Google

**1242** Barons refuse subsidies.
**1246**–**1283** Llewellyn-ap-Gryffyth, Prince in North Wales.
**1248** Irish refusal of subsidies.
Earl Simon in Gascony.
**1253** Earl Simon returns to England.
**1259** Provisions of Oxford.
**1261** Earl Simon leaves England.
**1264** Mise of Amiens.
Battle of Lewes.
**1265** Commons summoned to Parliament.
Battle of Evesham.
**1267** *Roger Bacon writes his "Opus Majus."*
**1268** Llewellyn-ap-Gryffyth owned as Prince of Wales.
**1270** Edward goes on Crusade.
**1274** **Edward the First,** died 1307.
**1277** Edward reduces Llewellyn-ap-Gryffyt submission.
**1279** Statute of Mortmain.
**1282** Conquest of Wales.
**1284** Statute of Merchants.
**1285** Statute of Winchester.
**1290** Statute "Quia Emptores."
Expulsion of the Jews.
Marriage Treaty of Brigham.
**1291** Parliament at Norham settles Sco. succession.
**1293** Edward claims appeals from Scotland.
**1294** Seizure of Guienne by Philip of Fran.
**1295** French fleet attacks Dover.
Final organization of the English Parlia. ment.

## THE WAR WITH SCOTLAND AND FRANCE.

### 1296—1485.

**1296** Edward conquers Scotland.
**1297** Victory of Wallace at Stirling.
Outlawry of the Clergy.
Barons refuse to serve in Flanders.
**1[illegible]8** Edward forced to renounce illegal taxation.
Edward conquers Scots at Falkirk.
Peace with France.
**1301** Barons demand nomination of Ministers by Parliament
**1302** Barons exact fresh Confirmation of the Charters.
**1304** Final submission of Scotland.
**1305** Parliament of Perth.
**1306** Rising of Robert Bruce.
**1307** Parliament of Carlisle. First Statute of Provisors.
**Edward the Second,** died 1327.
**1308** Gaveston exiled.
**1310** The Lords Ordainers draw up Articles of Reform.
**1312** Death of Gaveston.
**1314** Battle of Bannockburn.
**1316** Battle of Athenry.
**1318** Edward accepts the Ordinances.
**1322** Death of Earl of Leicester. Ordinances annulled.
**1323** Truce with the Scots.
**1324** French attack Aquitaine.
**1325** The Queen and Prince Edward in France
**1326** Queen lands in England.
**1327** Deposition of Edward II.
**1327** **Edward the Third,** died 1377.
**1328** Treaty of Northampton recognizes independence of Scotland.
**1329** Death of Robert Bruce.
**1330** Death of Roger Mortimer.
**1332** Edward Balliol invades Scotland.
**1333** Battle of Halidon Hill.
Balliol does homage to Edward.
**1334** Balliol driven from Scotland.
**1335**–**1336** Edward invades Scotland.
**1336** France again declares war.
**1337**–**1338** War with France and Scotland.
**1339** Edward claims crown of France.
Edward attacks France from Brabant.
**1340** Battle of Sluys.
**1343** War in Brittany and Guienne.
**1346** Battles of Cressy and Neville's Cross.
**1347** Capture of Calais.
Truce with France.
**1349** First appearance of the Black Death.
**1351**–**1353** Statutes of Labourers.
**1353** First Statute of Præmunire.
**1354** Renewal of French war.
**1356** Battle of Poitiers
**1360** Treaty of Bretigny.
**1367** The Black Prince victorious at Najara.
Statute of Kilkenny.
**1368** Renewal of French war.
*Wyclif's treatise "De Dominio."*
**1370** Storm of Limoges.
**1372** Victory of Spanish fleet off Rochelle.
**1374** Revolt of Aquitaine.
**1376** The Good Parliament.
**1377** Its work undone by the Duke of Lancaster.
Wyclif before the Bishop of London.

Digitized by Google

**1377** **Richard the Second,** died 1399.
**1378** Gregory XI. denounces Wyclif's heresy.
**1380** *Longland's "Piers the Ploughman."*
**1381** Wyclif's declaration against Transubstantiation.
The Peasant Revolt.
**1382** Condemnation of Wyclif at Blackfriars.
Suppression of the Poor Preachers.
**1384** Death of Wyclif.
**1387** Barons force Richard to dismiss the Earl of Suffolk.
**1389** Truce with France.
**1394** Richard in Ireland.
**1396** Richard marries Isabella of France.
Truce with, prolonged.
**1397** Murder of the Duke of Gloucester.
**1398** Richard's plans of tyranny.
**1399** Deposition of Richard.
**Henry the Fourth,** died 1413.
**1400** Revolt of Owen Glendower in Wales.
**1401** Statute of Heretics.
**1402** Battle of Homildon Hill.
**1403** Revolt of the Percies.
**1404** French descents on England.
**1405** Revolt of Archbishop Scrope.
**1407** French attack Gascony.
**1411** English force sent to aid Duke of Burgundy in France.
**1413** **Henry the Fifth,** died 1422.
**1414** Lollard Conspiracy.
**1415** Battle of Agincourt.
**1417** Henry invades Normandy.
**1419** Alliance with Duke of Burgundy.
**1420** Treaty of Troyes.
**1422** **Henry the Sixth,** died 1471.
**1424** Battle of Verneuil.
**1429** Siege of Orleans.
**1430** County Suffrage restricted.
**1431** Death of Joan of Arc.
**1435** Congress of Arras.
**1444** Marriage of Margaret of Anjou.
**1447** Death of Duke of Gloucester.
**1450** Impeachment and death of Duke of Suffolk.
Cade's Insurrection.
**1451** Loss of Normandy and Guienne.
**1454** Duke of York named Protector.
**1455** First battle of S. Albans.
**1456** End of York's Protectorate.
**1459** Failure of Yorkist revolt.
**1460** Battle of Northampton.
York acknowledged as successor.
Battle of Wakefield.
**1461** Second battle of S. Albans.
Battle of Mortimer's Cross.
**Edward the Fourth,** died 1484.
Battle of Towton.
**1464** Edward marries Lady Grey.
**1470** Warwick driven to France.
Flight of Edward to Burgundy.
**1471** Battles of Barnet and Tewkesbury.
**1475** Edward invades France.
**1476** *Caxton settles in England.*
**1483** Murder of **Edward the Fifth.**
**Richard the Third,** died 1485.
Buckingham's insurrection.
**1485** Battle of Bosworth.

## THE TUDORS.

### 1485—1603.

**1485** **Henry the Seventh,** died 1509.
**1487** Conspiracy of Lambert Simnel.
**1489** Treaty with Ferdinand and Isabella.
**1491** Henry invades France.
**1496** Cornish rebellion.
Perkin Warbeck captured.
**1497** Sebastian Cabot lands in America.
**1499** *Colet and Erasmus at Oxford.*
**1501** Arthur Tudor marries Catherine of Arragon.
**1502** Margaret Tudor marries James the Fourth.
**1505** *Colet Dean of S. Paul's.*
**1509** **Henry the Eighth,** died 1547.
*Erasmus writes the "Praise of Folly."*
**1512** War with France. *Colet founds S. Paul's School.*
**1513** Battles of the Spurs and of Flodden.
Wolsey becomes chief Minister.
**1516** *More's "Utopia."*
**1517** Luther denounces Indulgences.
**1519** Field of Cloth of Gold.
**1520** Luther burns the Pope's Bull.
**1521** Quarrel of Luther with Henry the Eighth.
**1522** Renewal of French war.
**1523** Wolsey quarrels with the Commons.
**1524** Exaction of Benevolences defeated.
**1525** Peace with France. *Tyndal translates the Bible.*
**1527** Henry resolves on a Divorce. Persecution of Protestants.
**1529** Fall of Wolsey. Ministry of Norfolk and More.
**1531** King acknowledged as "Supreme Head of the Church of England."
**1532** Statute of Appeals. Anne Boleyn crowned.
**1534** Acts of Supremacy and Succession.
**1535** Cromwell Vicar-General. *Death of More.*

Digitized by Google

**1535** Overthrow of the Geraldines in Ireland.
**1536** English Bible issued.
Dissolution of lesser Monasteries.
**1537** Pilgrimage of Grace.
**1538** Execution of Lord Exeter and Lady Salisbury.
**1539** Law of Six Articles.
Suppression of greater Abbeys.
**1542** Completion of the Tudor Conquest of Ireland.
**1543** Fall of Cromwell.
**1547** Execution of Earl of Surrey.
**Edward the Sixth,** died 1553.
Battle of Pinkie Cleugh.
**1548** English Book of Common Prayer.
**1549** Western Rebellion. End of Somerset's Protectorate.
**1551** Death of Somerset.
**1552** Suppression of Chantries.
**1553** **Mary,** died 1559.
Chancellor discovers Archangel.
**1554** Mary marries Philip of Spain.
England absolved by Cardinal Pole.
**1555** Persecution of Protestants begins.
Burning of Archbishop Cranmer.
[redacted] War with France.
[redacted] Loss of Calais.
[redacted]**9** **Elizabeth,** died 1603.
—— restores Royal Supremacy and English Prayer Book.
**1560** War in Scotland.
**1561** Mary Stuart lands in Scotland.
**1562** Rebellion of Shane O'Neill in Ulster.
Elizabeth supports French Huguenots.
First penal statute against Catholics, and first Poor Law.
Hawkins begins Slave Trade with Africa.
**1563** English driven out of Havre.
Thirty-nine Articles imposed on clergy.
**1565** Mary marries Darnley.
**1566** Darnley murders Rizzio.
Royal Exchange built.
**1567** Bothwell murders Darnley.
Defeat and death of Shane O'Neill.
**1568** Mary flies to England.
**1569** Revolt of the northern Earls.
**1571** Bull of Deposition issued.
**1572** Conspiracy and death of Norfolk.
Rising of the Low Countries against Alva.
Cartwright's "Admonition to the Parliament."
**1575** Wentworth sent to the Tower.
**1576** *First public Theatre in Blackfriars.*
**1577** Landing of the Seminary Priests.
Drake sets sail for the Pacific.
**1578** *Lyly's "Euphues."*
**1579** *Spenser publishes "Shepherd's Calendar."*
**1580** Campian and Parsons in England.
Revolt of the Desmonds. Massacre of Smerwick.
**1583** Plots to assassinate Elizabeth.
New powers given to Ecclesiastical Commission.
**1584** Murder of Prince of Orange.
Armada gathers in the Tagus.
Colonization of Virginia.
**1585** English army sent to Netherlands.
Drake on the Spanish Coast.
**1586** Battle of Zutphen.
Babington's Plot.
*Shakspere in London.*
**1587** Death of Mary Stuart.
Drake burns Spanish fleet at Cadiz.
*Marlowe's "Tamburlaine."*
**1588** Defeat of the Armada.
*Martin Marprelate Tracts.*
**1589** Drake plunders Corunna.
**1590** *Publication of the "Faerie Queen."*
**1593** *Shakspere's "Venus and Adonis."*
**1594** Hooker's "Ecclesiastical Polity."
**1596** *Jonson's "Every Man in his Humour."*
Descent upon Cadiz.
**1597** Ruin of the Second Armada.
*Bacon's "Essays."*
**1598** Revolt of Hugh O'Neill.
**1599** Expedition of Earl of Essex in Ireland.
**1601** Execution of Essex.
**1603** Mountjoy completes the Conquest of Ireland.
Death of Elizabeth.

## THE STUARTS.

### 1603—1688.

**1603** **James the First,** died 1625.
Millenary Petition.
**1604** Parliament claims to deal with both Church and State.
Hampton Court Conference.
**1605** Gunpowder Plot.
**1605** *Bacon's "Advancement of Learning."*
**1610** Parliament's Petition of Grievances.
Plantation of Ulster.
**1613** Marriage of the Elector Palatine.
**1614** First quarrels with the Parliament.
**1615** Trial of the Earl of Somerset.

Digitized by Google

**1615** Disgrace of Chief-Justice Coke.
Sale of Peerages.
Proposals for the Spanish Marriage.
**1616** *Death of Shakspere.*
**1617** Bacon Lord Keeper.
Expedition and death of Raleigh.
The Declaration of Sports.
**1618** Beginning of Thirty Years' War.
**1620** Invasion of the Palatinate.
*Bacon's "Novum Organum."*
Landing of the Pilgrim-Fathers in New England,
Impeachment of Bacon.
**1621** James tears out the Protestation of the Commons.
**1623** Journey of Charles to Madrid.
**1624** Resolve of War against Spain.
**1625** **Charles the First,** died 1649.
First Parliament dissolved.
Failure of expedition against Cadiz.
**1626** Buckingham impeached.
Second Parliament dissolved.
**1627** Levy of Benevolence and Forced Loan.
Failure of expedition to Rochelle.
**1628** The Petition of Right.
Murder of Buckingham.
Laud Bishop of London.
**1629** Dissolution of Third Parliament.
Charter granted to Massachusetts.
Wentworth Lord President of the North.
**1630** Puritan Emigration to New England.
**1631** Wentworth Lord Deputy in Ireland.
**1633** Laud Archbishop of Canterbury.
*Milton's "Allegro" and "Penseroso."*
Prynne's "Histrio-mastrix."
**1634** *Milton's "Comus."*
**1636** Juxon Lord Treasurer.
Book of Canons and Common Prayer issued for Scotland.
**1637** Hampden refuses to pay Ship-money.
Revolt of Edinburgh.
Trial of Hampden.
**1638** *Milton's "Lycidas."*
The Scotch Covenant.
**1639** Leslie at Dunse Law.
Pacification of Berwick.
**1640** The Short Parliament.
The Bishops' War.
Great Council of Peers at York.
Long Parliament meets, *Nov.*
**1641** Execution of Strafford, *May.*
Charles visits Scotland.
The Irish Massacre, *Oct.*
The Grand Remonstrance, *Nov.*
**1642** Impeachment of Five Members, *Jan.*
**1642** Charles before Hull, *April.*
Royalists withdraw from Parliament.
Charles raises Standard at Nottingham, *August.*
Battle of Edgehill, *Oct.* 23.
*Hobbes writes the "De Cive."*
**1643** Assembly of Divines assembles at Westminster.
Rising of the Cornishmen, *May.*
Death of Hampden, *June.*
Battle of Roundway Down, *July.*
Siege of Gloucester, *Aug.*
Taking of the Covenant, *Sept.* 23.
**1644** Fight at Cropredy Bridge, *June.*
Battle of Marston Moor, *July.*
Surrender of Parliamentary Army in Cornwall, *Sept.*
Battle of Tippermuir, *Sept.*
Battle of Newbury, *Oct.*
**1645** Self-renouncing Ordinance, *April.*
New Model raised.
Battle of Naseby, *June* 14.
Battle of Philiphaugh, *Sept.*
**1646** Charles surrenders to the Scots, *May.*
**1647** Scots surrender Charles to the Houses, *Feb.*
Army elects Adjutators, *April.*
The King seized at Holmby House, *June.*
"Humble Representation" of the Army. *June.*
Expulsion of the Eleven Members.
Army occupies London, *Aug.*
Flight of the King, *Nov.*
Secret Treaty of Charles with the Scots, *Dec.*
**1648** Outbreak of the Royalist Revolt, *Feb.*
Revolt of the Fleet, and of Kent, *May.*
Fairfax and Cromwell in Essex and Wales, *June—July.*
Battle of Preston, *Aug.* 18.
Surrender of Colchester, *Aug.* 27.
Pride's Purge, *Dec.*
*Royal Society begins at Oxford.*
**1649** Execution of Charles I., *Jan.* 30.
Scotland proclaims Charles II.
England proclaims itself a Commonwealth.
Cromwell storms Drogheda, *Aug.*
**1650** Cromwell enters Scotland, *May.*
Battle of Dunbar, *Sept.* 3.
**1651** Battle of Worcester, *Sept.* 3.
Union with Scotland and Ireland.
*Hobbes's "Leviathan."*
**1652** Outbreak of Dutch War, *May.*
Victory of Tromp, *Nov.*
**1653** Victory of Blake, *Feb.*
Cromwell drives out the Parliament, *April* 19.

Digitized by Google

**1653** Constituent Convention (Barebones Parliament), *July*.
Convention dissolves, *Dec.*
**1654** The Instrument of Government.
**Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector,** died 1658.
Peace concluded with Holland.
First Protectorate Parliament, *Sept.*
**1655** Dissolution of the Parliament, *Jan.*
The Major-Generals.
Settlement of Scotland and Ireland.
Settlement of the Church.
**1656** Blake in the Mediterranean.
War with Spain and Conquest of Jamaica.
Second Protectorate Parliament, *Sept.*
**1657** Blake's victory at Santa Cruz.
Cromwell refuses title of King.
Act of Government.
**1658** Parliament dissolved, *Feb.*
Battle of the Dunes.
Capture of Dunkirk.
Death of Cromwell, *Sept.* 3.
**Richard Cromwell, Lord Protector,** died 1712.
**1659** Third Protectorate Parliament.
Parliament dissolved.
Long Parliament recalled.
Long Parliament again driven out.
**1660** Monk enters London.
The "Convention" Parliament.
**Charles the Second,** lands at Dover, *May*, died 1685.
Union of Scotland and Ireland undone.
**1661** Cavalier Parliament begins.
Act of Uniformity re-enacted.
**1662** Puritan clergy driven out.
*Royal Society at London.*
**1663** Dispensing Bill fails.
**1664** Conventicle Act.
Dutch War begins.
**1665** Five Mile Act.
Plague and Fire of London.
*Newton's Theory of Fluxions.*
**1667** The Dutch in the Medway.
Dismissal of Clarendon.
Peace of Breda.
Lewis attacks Flanders.
*Milton's "Paradise Lost."*
**1668** The Triple Alliance.
Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle.
**1669** Ashley shrinks back from toleration to Catholics.
**1670** Treaty of Dover.
*Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" written.*
**1671** *Milton's "Paradise Regained" and "Samson Agonistes."*
**1671** *Newton's Theory of Light.*
Closing of the Exchequer.
**1672** Declaration of Indulgence.
War begins with Holland.
Ashley made Chancellor.
Declaration of Indulgence withdrawn.
**1673** The Test Act.
Shaftesbury dismissed.
Shaftesbury takes the lead of the Country Party.
**1674** Bill of Protestant Securities fails.
Charles makes peace with Holland.
Danby Lord Treasurer.
**1675** Treaty of mutual aid between Charles and Lewis.
**1676** Shaftesbury sent to the Tower.
**1677** Bill for Security of the Church fails.
Address of the Commons for War with France.
Prince of Orange marries Mary.
**1678** Peace of Nimeguen.
Oates invents the Popish Plot.
Fall of Danby.
New Ministry with Shaftesbury at its head.
Temple's plan for a new Council.
**1679** New Parliament meets.
Habeas Corpus Act passed.
Exclusion Bill introduced.
Parliament dissolved.
Shaftesbury dismissed.
**1680** Committee for agitation formed.
Monmouth pretends to the throne.
Petitioners and Abhorrers.
Exclusion Bill thrown out by the Lords.
Trial of Lord Stafford.
**1681** Parliament at Oxford.
Limitation Bill rejected.
Monmouth and Shaftesbury arrested.
**1682** Conspiracy and flight of Shaftesbury.
Rye-house Plot.
**1683** Death of Shaftesbury.
Execution of Lord Russell and Algernon Sidney.
**1684** Town charters quashed.
Army increased.
**1685** **James the Second,** died 1701.
Insurrection of Argyle and Monmouth.
Battle of Sedgemoor, *July* 6.
The Bloody Circuit.
Army raised to 20,000 men.
Revocation of Edict of Nantes.
**1686** Parliament refuses to repeal Test Act.
Test Act dispensed with by royal authority.
Ecclesiastical Commission set up.
**1687** *Newton's "Principia."*
Expulsion of the Fellows of Magdalen.

Digitized by Google

**1687** Dismissal of Lords Rochester and Clarendon.
Declaration of Indulgence.
The Boroughs regulated.
William of Orange protests against the Declaration.
Tyrconnell made Lord Deputy in Ireland.

**1688** Clergy refuse to read Declaration of Indulgence.
Threat of the Seven Bishops.
Irish troops brought over to England.
Lewis attacks Germany.
William of Orange lands at Torbay.
Flight of James.

## MODERN ENGLAND.

### 1689—1874.

**1689** Convention Parliament.
Declaration of Rights.
**William and Mary made King and Queen.**
William forms the Grand Alliance against Lewis.
Battle of Killiecrankie, *July* 27.
Siege of Londonderry.
Mutiny Bill.
Toleration Bill.
Bill of Rights.
Secession of the Non-jurors.
**1690** Abjuration Bill and Act of Grace.
Battle of Beachy Head, *June* 29.
Battle of the Boyne, *July* 6.
William repulsed from Limerick.
**1691** Battle of Aughrim, *July*.
Capitulation and Treaty of Limerick.
**1692** Massacre of Glencoe.
Battle of La Hogue, *May* 19.
**1693** Sunderland's plan of a Ministry.
**1694** Bank of England set up.
Death of Mary.
**1696** Currency restored.
**1697** Peace of Ryswick.
**1698** First Partition Treaty.
**1700** Second Partition Treaty.
**1701** Duke of Anjou becomes King of Spain.
Death of James the Second.
Act of Settlement passed.
**1702** **Anne,** died 1714.
**1704** Battle of Blenheim, *August* 13.
Harley and St. John take office.
**1705** Victories of Peterborough in Spain.
**1706** Battle of Ramillies, *May* 23.
**1707** Act of Union with Scotland.
**1708** Battle of Oudenarde.
Dismissal of Harley and St. John.
**1709** Battle of Malplaquet.
**1710** Trial of Sacheverel.
Tory Ministry of Harley and St John.
**1712** Dismissal of Marlborough.
**1713** Treaty of Utrecht.
**1714** **George the First,** died 1727.

**1714** Ministry of Townshend and Walpole.
**1715** Jacobite Revolt under Lord Mar.
**1716** Ministry of Lord Stanhope.
The Septennial Bill.
**1717** The Triple Alliance.
**1718** The Quadruple Alliance.
**1720** Failure of the Peerage Bill.
The South Sea Company.
**1721** Ministry of Sir Robert Walpole.
**1722** Exile of Bishop Atterbury.
**1727** War with Austria and Spain.
**George the Second,** died 1760.
**1729** Treaty of Seville.
**1730** Free exportation of American rice allowed.
**1731** Treaty of Vienna.
**1733** Walpole's Excise Bill.
War of the Polish Succession.
Family Compact between France and Spain.
**1737** Death of Queen Caroline.
**1738** *The Methodists appear in London.*
**1739** War declared with Spain.
**1740** War of the Austrian Succession.
**1742** Resignation of Walpole.
**1743** Ministry of Henry Pelham.
Battle of Dettingen, *June* 27.
**1745** Battle of Fontenoy, *May* 31.
Charles Edward lands in Scotland.
Battle of Prestonpans, *Sept.* 21.
Charles Edward reaches Derby, *Dec.* 4.
**1746** Battle of Falkirk, *Jan.* 23.
Battle of Culloden, *April* 16.
**1748** Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle.
**1751** Clive's surprise of Arcot.
**1754** Death of Henry Pelham.
Ministry of Duke of Newcastle.
**1755** The Seven Years' War.
Defeat of General Braddock.
**1756** Loss of Port Mahon.
Retreat of Admiral Byng.
**1757** Convention of Closter-Seven.
Ministry of William Pitt.
Battle of Plassey, *June* 23.
**1758** Capture of Louisburg and Cape Breton.

Digitized by Google

**1758** Capture of Fort Duquesne.
**1759** Battle of Minden, *August* 1.
Battle of Quiberon Bay, *Nov.* 20.
Capture of Fort Niagara and Ticonderoga.
Wolfe's victory on heights of Abraham.
**1760** **George the Third,** died 1820.
Battle of Wandewash.
**1761** Ministry of Lord Bute.
*Brindley's Canal over the Irwell.*
**1762** Peace of Paris.
**1763** *Wedgewood establishes potteries.*
**1764** *Hargreaves invents Spinning Jenny.*
**1765** Stamp Act passed.
Ministry of Lord Rockingham.
Meeting and Protest of American Congress
*Watt invents Steam Engine.*
**1766** Repeal of the Stamp Act.
Ministry of Lord Chatham.
**1768** Ministry of the Duke of Grafton.
Expulsion of Wilkes from House of Commons.
*Arkwright invents Spinning Machine.*
**1769** Wilkes three times elected for Middlesex.
House of Commons seats Col. Luttrell.
Occupation of Boston by British troops.
*Letters of Junius.*
**1770** Ministry of Lord North.
Chatham's proposal of Parliamentary Reform.
**1771** Last attempt to prevent Parliamentary reporting.
*Beginning of the great English Journals.*
**1773** Hastings appointed Governor-General.
Boston tea-ships.
**1774** Military occupation of Boston.
Its port closed.
Massachusetts Charter altered.
Congress assembles at Philadelphia.
**1775** Rejection of Chatham's plan of conciliation.
Skirmish at Lexington.
Americans, under Washington, besiege Boston.
Battle of Bunker's Hill.
Southern Colonies expel their Governors.
**1776** *Crompton invents the Mule.*
Arnold invades Canada.
Evacuation of Boston.
Declaration of Independence, *July* 4.
Battles of Brooklyn and Trenton.
*Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations."*
**1777** Battle of Brandywine.
Surrender of Saratoga, *Oct.* 13.
Chatham proposes Federal Union.
Washington at Valley Forge.
**1778** Alliance of France with United States.
**1778** Death of Chatham, *April* 7.
**1779** Alliance of Spain with United States.
Siege of Gibraltar.
Armed Neutrality of Northern Powers.
The Irish Volunteers.
**1780** Cornwallis captures Charleston.
Descent of Hyder Ali on the Carnatic.
**1781** Defeat of Hyder at Porto Novo.
Surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown.
**1782** Ministry of Lord Rockingham.
Victories of Rodney.
Repeal of Poyning's Act.
Pitt's Bill for Parliamentary Reform.
Burke's Bill of Economical Reform.
Shelburne Ministry.
Repulse of Allies from Gibraltar,
Treaties of Paris and Versailles.
**1783** Coalition Ministry of Fox and North.
Fox's India Bill.
Ministry of Pitt.
**1784** Pitt's India Bill.
Sinking Fund and Excise.
**1785** Parliamentary Reform Bill.
Free Trade Bill between England and Ireland.
**1786** Trial of Warren Hastings.
**1787** Treaty of Commerce with France.
**1788** The Regency Bill.
**1789** Meeting of States-General at Versailles.
New French Constitution.
Triple Alliance for defence of Turkey.
**1790** Quarrel over Nootka Sound.
Pitt defends Poland.
*Burke's "Reflections on the French Revolution."*
**1791** Representative Government set up in Canada.
Fox's Libel Act.
*Burke's "Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs."*
**1792** Pitt hinders Holland from joining the Coalition.
France opens the Scheldt.
Pitt's efforts for peace.
The United Irishmen.
**1793** France declares War on England.
Part of Whigs join Pitt.
English army lands in Flanders.
**1794** English driven from Toulon.
English driven from Holland.
Suspension of Habeas Corpus Act.
Victory of Lord Howe, *June* 21.
**1796** Battle of Cape St. Vincent.
*Burke's "Letters on a Regicide Peace."*
**1797** England alone in the War with France.
Battle of Camperdown.

Digitized by Google

1798 Irish revolt crushed at Vinegar Hill.
Battle of the Nile.
1799 Pitt revives the Coalition against France.
Conquest of Mysore.
1800 Surrender of Malta to English Fleet.
Armed Neutrality of Northern Powers.
Act of Union with Ireland.
1801 George the Third, rejects Pitt's plan of Catholic Emancipation.
Administration of Mr. Addington.
Surrender of French army in Egypt.
Battle of Copenhagen.
1802 Peace of Amiens.
*Publication of Edinburgh Review.*
1803 Buonaparte declares War.
Battle of Assaye.
Second Ministry of Pitt.
1805 Battle of Trafalgar, *Oct.* 21.
1806 Death of Pitt, *Jan.* 23.
Ministry of Lord Grenville.
Death of Fox.
1807 Orders in Council.
Abolition of Slave Trade.
Ministry of Duke of Portland.
Seizure of Danish fleet.
1808 America passes Non-Intercourse Act.
Battle of Vimiera, and Convention of Cintra.
1809 Battle of Corunna, *Jan.* 16.
Wellesley drives Soult from Oporto.
Battle of Talavera, *July* 27.
Expedition against Walcheren.
Ministry of Spencer Perceval.
Revival of Parliamentary Reform.
1810 Battle of Busaco.
Lines of Torres Vedras.
1811 Prince of Wales becomes Regent.
Battle of Fuentes d'Onore, *May* 5.
Wellington repulsed from Badajoz and Almeida.
Luddite Riots.
1812 Assassination of Spencer Perceval.
Ministry of Lord Liverpool.
Storm of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz.
America declares War against England.
Battle of Salamanca, *July* 22.
Wellington retreats from Burgos.
Victories of American Frigates.
1813 Battle of Vittoria, *June* 21.
Battles of the Pyrenees.
Wellington enters France, *Oct.*
Americans attack Canada.
1814 Battle of Orthez.
Battle of Toulouse, *April* 10.
Battle of Chippewa, *July.*
Raid upon Washington.
1814 British repulses at Plattsburg and New Orleans.
1815 Battle of Quatre Bras, *June* 16.
Battle of Waterloo, *June* 18.
Treaty of Vienna.
1819 Manchester Massacre.
1820 Cato Street Conspiracy.
**George the Fourth,** died 1830.
Bill for the Queen's Divorce.
1822 Canning Foreign Minister.
1823 Mr. Huskisson joins the Ministry.
1826 Expedition to Portugal.
Recognition of South American States.
1827 Ministry of Mr. Canning.
Ministry of Lord Goderich.
Battle of Navarino.
1828 Ministry of Duke of Wellington.
1829 Catholic Emancipation Bill.
1830 **William the Fourth,** died 1837.
Ministry of Lord Grey.
*Opening of Liverpool and Manchester Railway.*
1831 Reform Agitation.
1832 Parliamentary Reform Bill passed, *June* 7.
1833 Suppression of Colonial Slavery.
East India trade thrown open.
1834 Ministry of Lord Melbourne.
New Poor Law.
System of National Education begun.
Ministry of Sir Robert Peel.
1835 Ministry of Lord Melbourne replaced.
Municipal Corporation Act.
1836 General Registration Act.
Civil Marriages Act.
1837 **Victoria.**
1839 Committee of Privy Council for Education instituted.
Demands for a People's Charter.
Formation of Anti-Corn-Law League.
Revolt in Canada.
War with China.
Occupation of Cabul.
1840 Quadruple Alliance with France, Portugal, and Spain.
Bombardment of Acre.
1841 Ministry of Sir Robert Peel.
Income Tax revived.
Peace with China.
Massacre of English Army in Affghanistan.
1842 Victories of Pollock in Affghanistan.
1845 Battles of Moodkee and Ferozeshah.
1846 Battle of Sobraon.
Annexation of Scinde.
Repeal of the Corn Laws.
1847 Ministry of Lord John Russell.

Digitized by Google

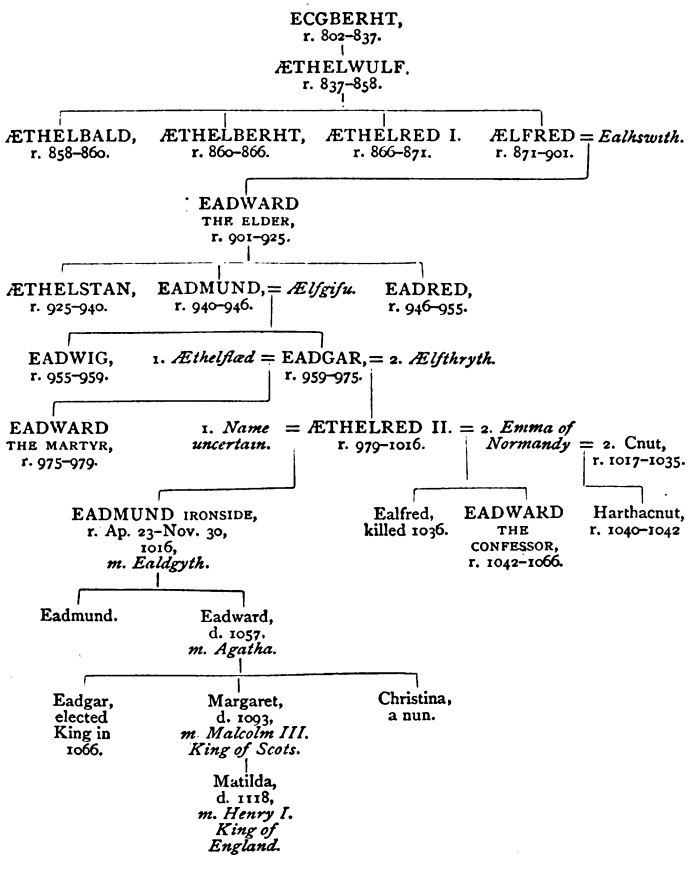
**1848** Suppression of the Chartists and Irish rebels.
Victory of Goojerat.
Annexation of the Punjaub.
**1852** Ministry of Lord Derby.
**1853** Ministry of Lord Aberdeen.
**1854** Alliance with France against Russia.
Siege of Sebastopol.
Battle of Inkermann, *Nov.* 5.
**1855** Ministry of Lord Palmerston.
Capture of Sebastopol.
**1856** Peace of Paris with Russia.
**1857** Sepoy Mutiny in Bengal.
**1858** Sovereignty of India transferred to the Crown.
Volunteer movement.
**1858** Second Ministry of Lord Derby.
**1859** Second Ministry of Lord Palmerston.
**1865** Ministry of Lord Russell.
**1866** Third Ministry of Lord Derby.
**1867** Parliamentary Reform Bill.
Ministry of Mr. Disraeli.
**1868** Ministry of Mr. Gladstone.
Abolition of compulsory Church Rates.
**1869** Disestablishment of Episcopal Church in Ireland.
**1870** Irish Land Bill.
Education Bill.
**1871** Abolition of religious tests in Universities.
Army Bill.
Ballot Bill.
**1874** Second Ministry of Mr. Disraeli.

Digitized by Google

# GENEALOGICAL TABLES.

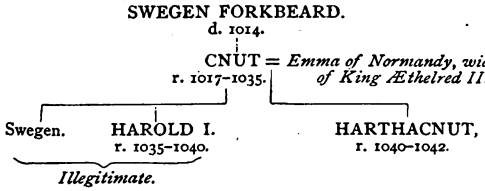
Digitized by Google

## KINGS OF THE HOUSE OF CERDIC, FROM ECGBERHT.



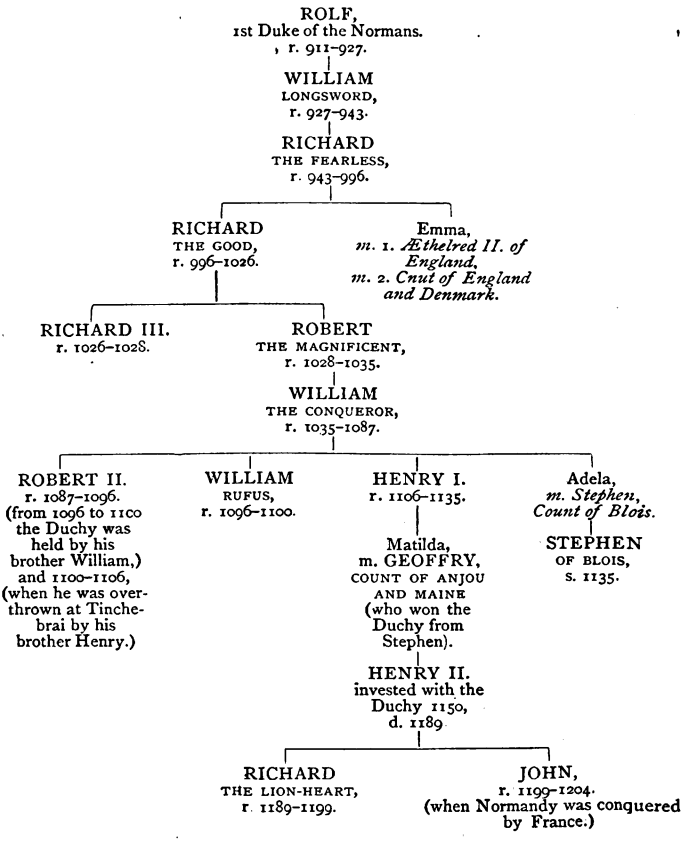

Digitized by Google

## THE DANISH KINGS.



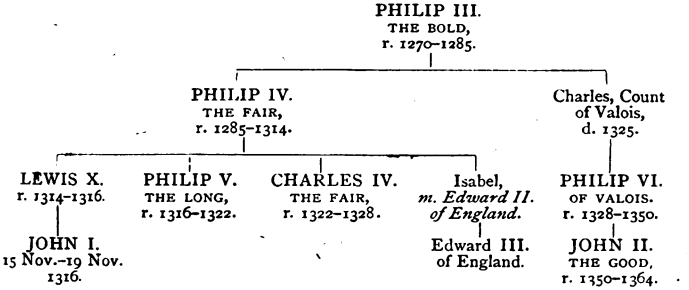

Digitized by Google

## DUKES OF THE NORMANS.

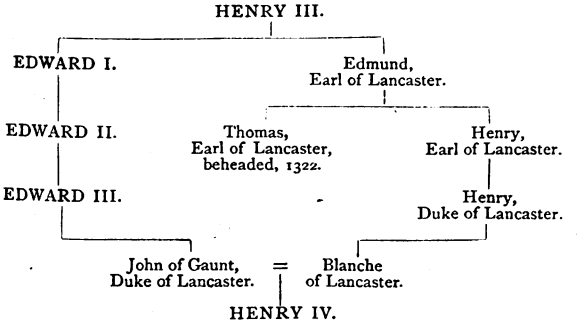



Digitized by Google

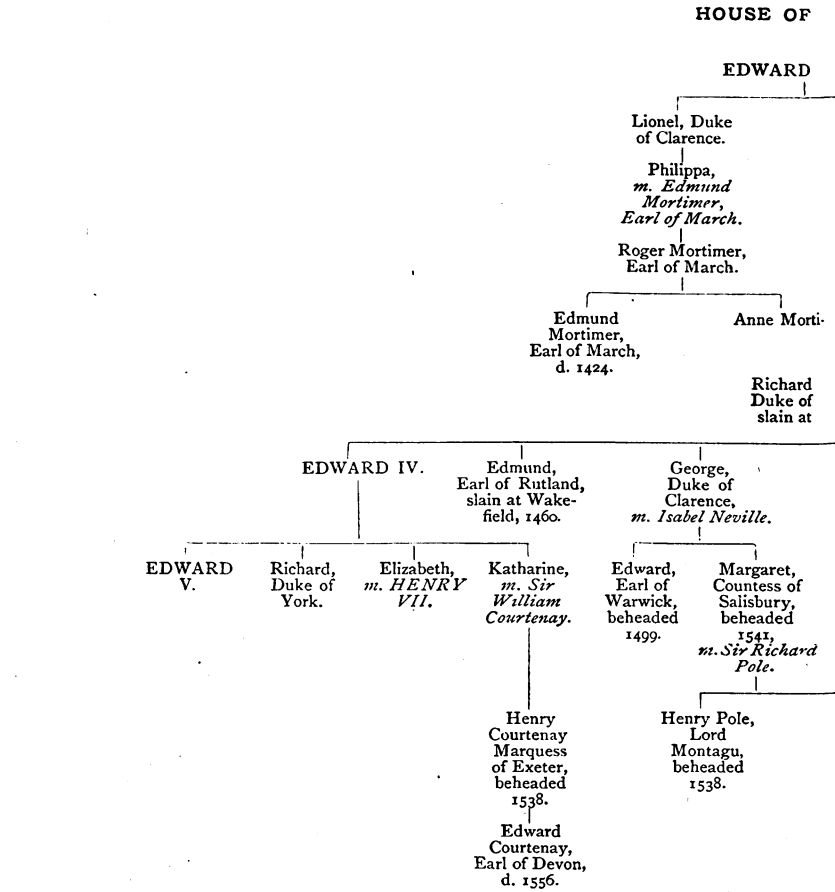
## Claim of EDWARD III. to the French Crown.




## Descent of HENRY IV.




Digitized by Google


HOUSE OF
EDWARD
Lionel, Duke of Clarence.
Philippa, m. Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March.
Roger Mortimer, Earl of March.
Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, d. 1424.
Anne Morti-
Richard Duke of
slain at
EDWARD IV.
Edmund, Earl of Rutland, slain at Wakefield, 1460.
George, Duke of Clarence, m. Isabel Neville.
EDWARD V.
Richard, Duke of York.
Elizabeth, m. HENRY VII.
Katharine, m. Sir William Courtenay.
Edward, Earl of Warwick, beheaded 1499.
Margaret, Countess of Salisbury, beheaded 1541, m. Sir Richard Pole.
Henry Courtenay Marquess of Exeter, beheaded 1538.
Edward Courtenay, Earl of Devon, d. 1556.
Henry Pole, Lord Montagu, beheaded 1538.

Digitized by Google

**YORK.**

III.

Edmund of Langley, Duke of York.

mer = Richard, Earl of Cambridge, beheaded 1415.

Plantagenet, York, Wakefield, 1460.

RICHARD III. *m. Anne Neville.*

Elizabeth = *John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk.*

Margaret, *m. Charles, Duke of Burgundy.*

Edward, Prince of Wales, d. 1484.

John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln, slain at Stoke, 1487.

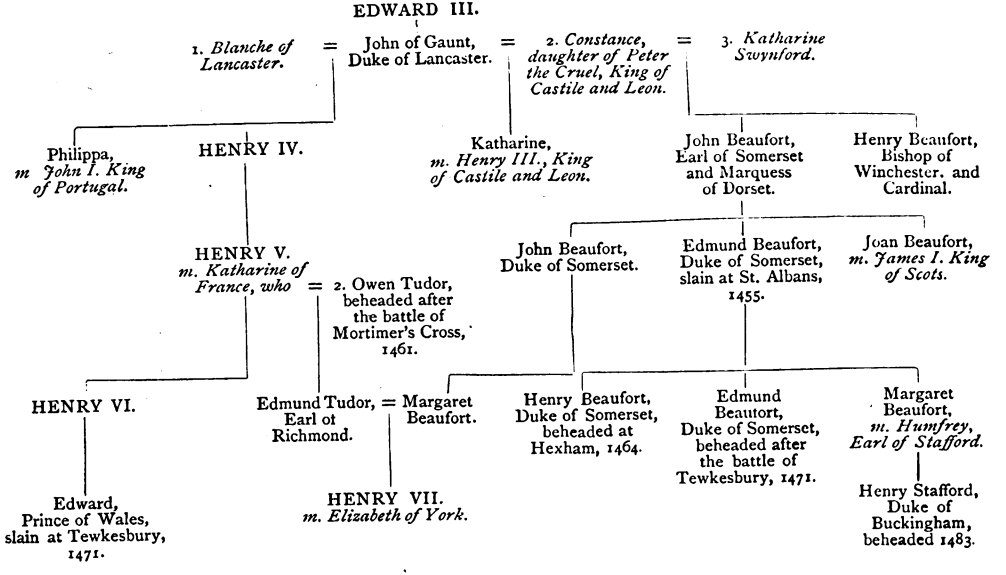
Edmund de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, beheaded 1513.

Richard de la Pole, slain at the battle of Pavia, 1525

Reginald Pole, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Cardinal, d. 1558.

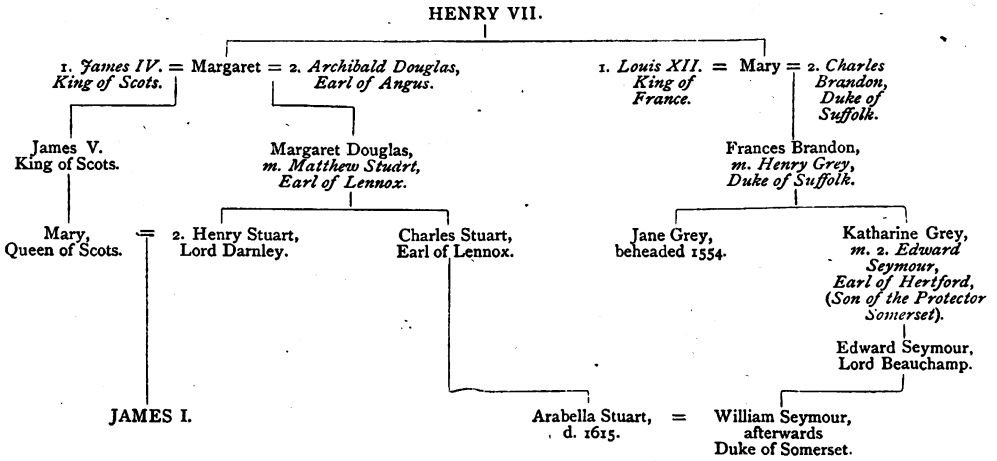
Digitized by Google

## HOUSE OF LANCASTER.


EDWARD III.
1. Blanche of Lancaster.
=
John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster.
=
2. Constance, daughter of Peter the Cruel, King of Castile and Leon.
=
3. Katharine Swynford.
Philippa, m John I. King of Portugal.
HENRY IV.
Katharine, m. Henry III., King of Castile and Leon.
John Beaufort, Earl of Somerset and Marquess of Dorset.
Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester. and Cardinal.
HENRY V. m. Katharine of France, who
=
2. Owen Tudor, beheaded after the battle of Mortimer's Cross, 1461.
John Beaufort, Duke of Somerset.
Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, slain at St. Albans, 1455.
Joan Beaufort, m. James I. King of Scots.
HENRY VI.
Edmund Tudor, Earl of Richmond.
=
Margaret Beaufort.
Henry Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, beheaded at Hexham, 1464.
Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, beheaded after the battle of Tewkesbury, 1471.
Margaret Beaufort, m. Humfrey, Earl of Stafford.
Edward, Prince of Wales, slain at Tewkesbury, 1471.
HENRY VII. m. Elizabeth of York.
Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, beheaded 1483.

Digitized by Google

## DESCENDANTS OF THE DAUGHTERS OF HENRY VII.


HENRY VII.
1. James IV. King of Scots.
Margaret
2. Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus.
1. Louis XII. King of France.
Mary
2. Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk.
James V. King of Scots.
Margaret Douglas, m. Matthew Stuart, Earl of Lennox.
Frances Brandon, m. Henry Grey, Duke of Suffolk.
Mary, Queen of Scots.
2. Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley.
Charles Stuart, Earl of Lennox.
Jane Grey, beheaded 1554.
Katharine Grey, m. 2. Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford, (Son of the Protector Somerset).
Edward Seymour, Lord Beauchamp.
JAMES I.
Arabella Stuart, d. 1615.
William Seymour, afterwards Duke of Somerset.

Digitized by Google

THE SOVEREIGNS

*Since the*

WILLIAM I.
*m. Matilda*

Robert,
Duke of Normandy,
b. about 1056,
d. 1134.

William,
Count of Flanders,
b. 1101, d. 1128.

WILLIAM II.
b. about 1060,
d. 1100.

Henry,
b. 1155, d. 1183.

RICHARD I.
b. 1157, d. 1199.

Digitized by Google

## OF ENGLAND.

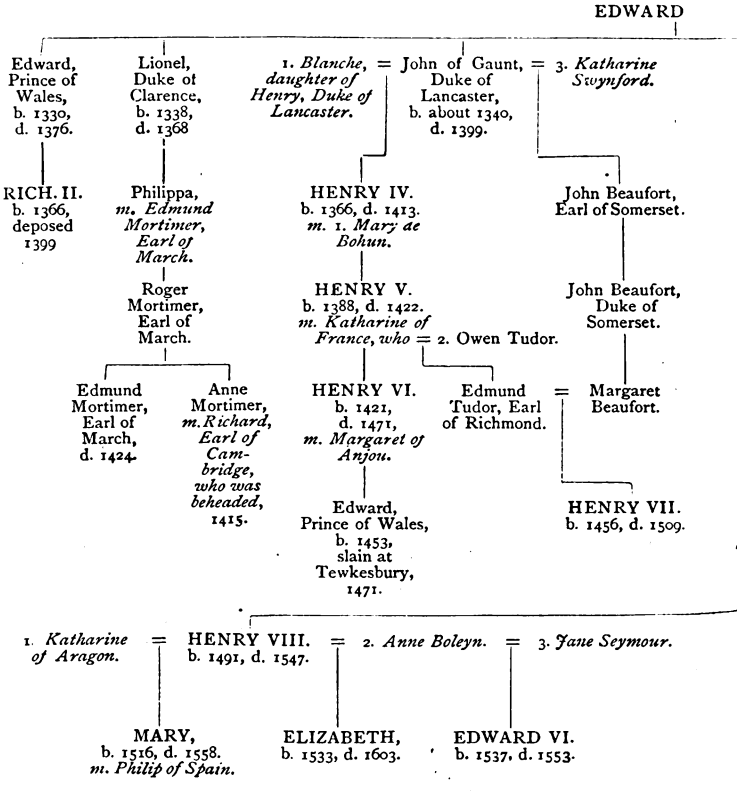
*Norman Conquest.*

b. about 1027, d. 1087.
*of Flanders.*

- HENRY I. b. 1068, d. 1135. *m.* 1. *Matilda of Scotland.*
  - Matilda, d. 1167, *m.* 2. *Geoffrey, Count of Anjou.*
    - HENRY II. b. 1133, d. 1189. *m. Eleanor of Aquitaine.*
      - Geoffrey, b. 1158, d. 1186. *m. Constance, heiress of Britanny.*
        - Arthur, Duke of Britanny, b. 1187.
      - JOHN, b. 1166, d. 1216. *m.* 2. *Isabel of Angoulême.*
        - HENRY III. b. 1207, d. 1272. *m. Eleanor of Provence.*
          - EDWARD I. b. 1239, d. 1307. *m.* 1. *Eleanor of Castile.*
            - EDWARD II. b. 1284, murdered 1327. *m. Isabel of France.*
              - EDWARD III. b. 1312, d. 1377. *m. Philippa of Hainault.*
                - [*See next page.*]
- Adela, d. 1137. *m. Stephen, Count of Blois.*
  - STEPHEN, d. 1154. *m. Matilda of Boulogne.*
    - Eustace, Count of Boulogne. d. 1153.
    - William, Count of Boulogne, d. 1160.

Digitized by Google

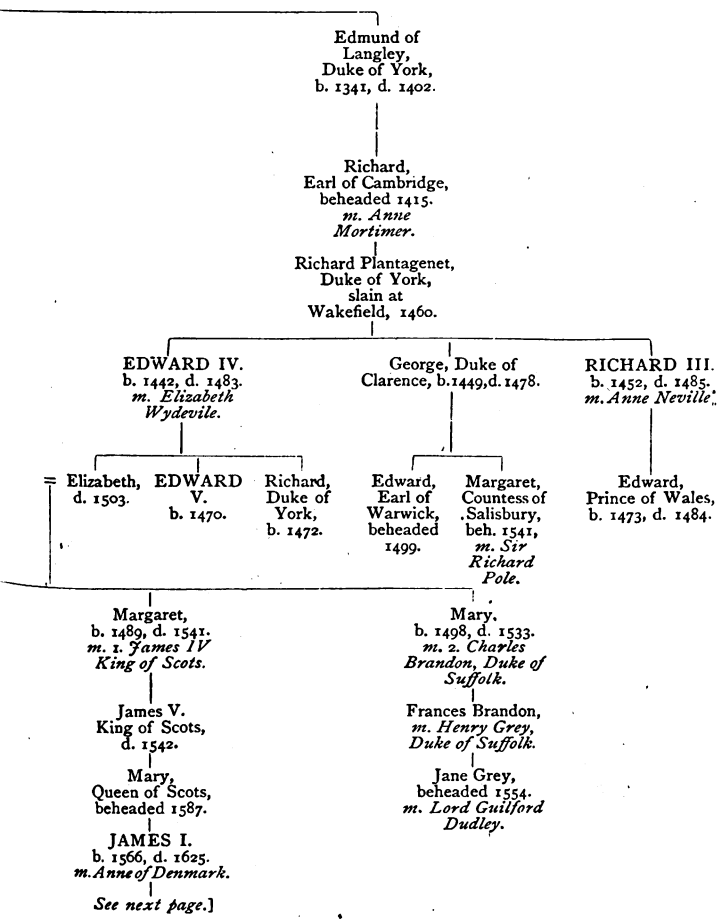
## THE SOVEREIGNS


EDWARD
Edward, Prince of Wales, b. 1330, d. 1376.
Lionel, Duke of Clarence, b. 1338, d. 1368
1. Blanche, daughter of Henry, Duke of Lancaster.
John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, b. about 1340, d. 1399.
3. Katharine Swynford.
RICH. II. b. 1366, deposed 1399
Philippa, m. Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March.
HENRY IV. b. 1366, d. 1413. m. 1. Mary de Bohun.
John Beaufort, Earl of Somerset.
Roger Mortimer, Earl of March.
HENRY V. b. 1388, d. 1422. m. Katharine of France, who = 2. Owen Tudor.
John Beaufort, Duke of Somerset.
Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, d. 1424.
Anne Mortimer, m. Richard, Earl of Cambridge, who was beheaded, 1415.
HENRY VI. b. 1421, d. 1471, m. Margaret of Anjou.
Edmund Tudor, Earl of Richmond.
Margaret Beaufort.
Edward, Prince of Wales, b. 1453, slain at Tewkesbury, 1471.
HENRY VII. b. 1456, d. 1509.
1. Katharine of Aragon.
HENRY VIII. b. 1491, d. 1547.
2. Anne Boleyn.
3. Jane Seymour.
MARY, b. 1516, d. 1558. m. Philip of Spain.
ELIZABETH, b. 1533, d. 1603.
EDWARD VI. b. 1537, d. 1553.

Digitized by Google

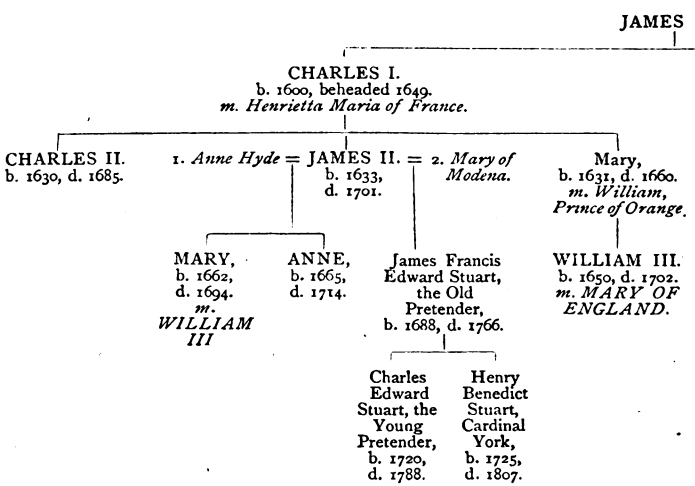
**OF ENGLAND—continued.**

III.


Edmund of Langley, Duke of York, b. 1341, d. 1402.
Richard, Earl of Cambridge, beheaded 1415. m. Anne Mortimer.
Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, slain at Wakefield, 1460.
EDWARD IV. b. 1442, d. 1483. m. Elizabeth Wydevile.
George, Duke of Clarence, b. 1449, d. 1478.
RICHARD III. b. 1452, d. 1485. m. Anne Neville.
= Elizabeth, d. 1503.
EDWARD V. b. 1470.
Richard, Duke of York, b. 1472.
Edward, Earl of Warwick, beheaded 1499.
Margaret, Countess of Salisbury, beh. 1541, m. Sir Richard Pole.
Edward, Prince of Wales, b. 1473, d. 1484.
Margaret, b. 1489, d. 1541. m. 1. James IV King of Scots.
Mary, b. 1498, d. 1533. m. 2. Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk.
James V. King of Scots, d. 1542.
Frances Brandon, m. Henry Grey, Duke of Suffolk.
Mary, Queen of Scots, beheaded 1587.
Jane Grey, beheaded 1554. m. Lord Guilford Dudley.
JAMES I. b. 1566, d. 1625. m. Anne of Denmark.
See next page.]

Digitized by Google

## THE SOVEREIGNS




Digitized by Google

**OF ENGLAND—continued.**

I.

Elizabeth,
b. 1596, d. 1662.
*m. Frederick,*
*Elector Palatine.*

Sophia,
d. 1714.
*m. Ernest Augustus,*
*Elector of Hanover.*

GEORGE I.
b. 1660, d 1727.
*m. Sophia Dorothea*
*of Zell.*

GEORGE II.
b. 1683, d. 1760.
*m. Caroline of*
*Brandenburg-*
*Anspach.*

Frederick,
Prince of Wales,
b. 1707, d. 1751.

GEORGE III.
b. 1738, d. 1820.
*m. Charlotte of*
*Mecklenburg-*
*Strelitz.*

GEORGE IV.
b. 1762, d. 1830.
*m. Caroline of*
*Brunswick-*
*Wolfenbüttel.*

Charlotte,
b. 1796, d. 1817.

WILLIAM IV.
b. 1765, d. 1837.

Edward,
Duke of Kent,
b. 1767, d. 1820.

VICTORIA,
b. 1819,
*m. Prince Albert of*
*Saxe-Coburg and*
*Gotha.*

Ernest Augustus,
King of Hanover,
b. 1771, d. 1851.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

# A SHORT HISTORY

OF

# THE ENGLISH PEOPLE.

## CHAPTER I.

### *THE ENGLISH KINGDOMS*, 607—1013.

#### Section I.—Britain and the English.

[*Authorities* for the constitution and settlement of the English, see Kemble's "Saxons in England," and especially the "Constitutional History of England" by Professor Stubbs. Sir Francis Palgrave's History of the English Commonwealth is valuable, but to be used with care. A vigorous and accurate sketch of the early constitution may be found in Mr. Freeman's History of the Norman Conquest, vol. i.]

---

**Old England.**

FOR the fatherland of the English race we must look far away from England itself. In the fifth century after the birth of Christ, the one country which bore the name of England was what we now call Sleswick, a district in the heart of the peninsula which parts the Baltic from the Northern seas. Its pleasant pastures, its black-timbered homesteads, its prim little townships looking down on inlets of purple water, were then but a wild waste of heather and sand, girt along the coast with sunless woodland, broken only on the western side by meadows which crept down to the marshes and the sea. The dwellers in this district were one out of three tribes, all belonging to the same Low German branch of the Teutonic family, who at the moment when history discovers them were bound together into a confederacy by the ties of a common blood and a common speech. To the north of the English lay the tribe of the Jutes, whose name is still preserved



Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
BRITAIN AND THE ENGLISH.

in their district of Jutland. To the south of them the tribe of the Saxons wandered over the sand-flats of Holstein, and along the marshes of Friesland and the Elbe. How close was the union of these tribes was shown by their use of a common name, while the choice o this name points out the tribe which at the moment when we first meet them must have been strongest and most powerful in the confederacy. Although they were all known as Saxons by the Roman people who touched them only on their southern border where the Saxons dwelt, and who remained ignorant of the very existence of the English or the Jutes, the three tribes bore among themselves the name of the central tribe of their league, the name of Englishmen.

**The English People.**

Of the temper and life of these English folk in this Old England we know little. But, from the glimpses which we catch of them when conquest had brought these Englishmen to the shores of Britain, their political and social organization must have been that of the German race to which they belonged. The basis of their society was the free landholder. In the English tongue he alone was known as "the man," or "the churl;" and two English phrases set his freedom vividly before us. He was "the free-necked man," whose long hair floated over a neck that had never bent to a lord. He was "the weaponed man," who alone bore spear and sword, for he alone possessed the right which in such a state of society formed the main check upon lawless outrage, the right of private war. Justice had to spring from each man's personal action; and every freeman was his own avenger. But, even in the earliest forms of English society of which we catch traces, this right of self-defence was being modified and restricted by a growing sense of public justice. The "blood-wite," or compensation in money for personal wrong, was the first effort of the tribe as a whole to regulate private revenge. The freeman's life and the freeman's limb had each on this system its legal price. "Eye for eye," ran the rough code, and "life for life," or for each fair damages. We see a further step towards the recognition of a wrong as done not to the individual man, but to the people at large, in another custom of the very earliest times. The price of life or limb was paid, not by the wrong-doer to the man he wronged, but by the family or house of the wrong-doer to the family or house of the wronged. Order and law were thus made to rest in each little group of English people upon the blood-bond which knit its families together; every outrage was held to have been done to all who were linked by blood to the doer of it, every crime to have been committed by all who were linked by blood to the sufferer from it. From this sense of the value of the family bond as a means of restraining the wrong-door by forces which the tribe as a whole did not as yet possess sprang the first rude forms of English justice. Each kinsman was his kinsman's keeper, bound to protect him from wrong, to hinder him from wrong-doing, and to suffer with and pav for him if wrong were

Digitized by Google

done. So fully was this principle recognized that, even if any man was charged before his fellow-tribesmen with crime, his kinsfolk still remained in fact his sole judges; for it was by their solemn oath of his innocence or his guilt that he had to stand or fall.

The blood-bond gave both its military and social form to Old English society. Kinsmen fought side by side in the hour of battle, and the feelings of honour and discipline were drawn from the common duty of every man in each little group of warriors to his house. And as they fought side by side on the field, so they dwelled side by side on the soil. Harling abode by Harling, and Billing by Billing; and each "wick" or "ham" or "stead" or "tun" took its name from the kinsmen who dwelt together in it. The home or "ham" of the Billings would be Billingham, and the "tun" or town of the Harlings would be Harlington. But in such settlements, the tie of blood was widened into the larger tie of land. Land with the German race seems everywhere to have been the accompaniment of full freedom. The freeman was strictly the free-holder, and the exercise of his full rights as a free member of the community to which he belonged was inseparable from the possession of his "holding." The landless man ceased for all practical purposes to be free, though he was no man's slave. In the very earliest glimpse we get of the German race we see them a race of land-holders and land-tillers. Tacitus, the first Roman who looked closely at these destined conquerors of Rome, found them a nation of farmers, pasturing on the forest glades around their villages, and ploughing their village fields. A feature which at once struck him as parting them from the civilized world to which he himself belonged was their hatred of cities and their love even within their little settlements of a jealous independence. "They live apart," he says, "each by himself, as woodside, plain, or fresh spring attracts him." And as each dweller within the settlement was jealous of his own isolation and independence among his fellow-settlers, so each settlement was jealous of its independence among its fellow-settlements. Each little farmer-commonwealth was girt in by its own border or "mark," a belt of forest or waste or fen which parted it from its fellow-villages, a ring of common ground which none of its settlers might take for his own, but which served as a death-ground where criminals met their doom, and was held to be the special dwelling-place of the nixie and the will-o'-the-wisp. If a stranger came through this wood or over this waste, custom bade him blow his horn as he came, for if he stole through secretly he was taken for a foe, and any man might lawfully slay him. Within the village we find from the first a marked social difference between two orders of its indwellers. The bulk of its homesteads were those of its freemen or "ceorls;" but amongst these were the larger homes of "eorls," or men distinguished among their fellows by noble blood, who were held in an hereditary reverence, and from



Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
BRITAIN AND THE ENGLISH.

whom the "ealdormen" of the village were chosen as leaders in war-time or rulers in time of peace. But the choice was a purely voluntary one, and the man of noble blood enjoyed no legal privilege above his fellows. The actual sovereignty within the settlement resided in the body of its freemen. Their homesteads clustered round a moot-hill, or round a sacred tree, where the whole community met to administer its own justice and to frame its own laws. Here the field was passed from man to man by the delivery of a turf cut from its soil, and the strife of farmer with farmer was settled according to the "customs" of the settlement, as its "elder-men" stated them, and the wrong-doer was judged and his fine assessed by the kinsfolk. Here, too, the "witan," the Wise Men of the village, met to settle questions of peace and war, to judge just judgment, and frame wise laws, as their descendants, the Wise Men of a later England, meet in Parliament at Westminster, to frame laws and do justice for the great empire which has sprung from this little body of farmer-commonwealths in Sleswick.

**The English Religion.**

The religion of the English was the same as that of the whole German family. Christianity, which had by this time brought about the conversion of the Roman Empire, had not penetrated as yet among the forests of the North. The common god of the English people, as of the whole German race, was Woden, the war-god, the guardian of ways and boundaries, to whom his worshippers attributed the invention of letters, and whom every tribe held to be the first ancestor of its kings. Our own names for the days of the week still recall to us the gods whom our English fathers worshipped in their Sleswick home-land. Wednesday is Woden's-day, as Thursday is the day of Thunder, or, as the Northmen called him, Thor, the god of air and storm and rain; Friday is Frea's-day, the goddess of peace and joy and fruitfulness, whose emblems, borne aloft by dancing maidens, brought increase to every field and stall they visited. Saturday commemorates an obscure god Soetere; Tuesday the Dark god, Tiw, to meet whom was death. Eostre, the goddess of the dawn, or of the spring, lends her name to the Christian festival of the Resurrection. Behind these floated the dim shapes of an older mythology, "Wyrd," the death-goddess, whose memory lingered long in the "weird" of northern superstition, or the Shield-Maidens, the "mighty women" who, an old rime tells us, "wrought on the battle-field their toil and hurled the shrilling javelins." Nearer to the popular fancy lay the deities of wood and fell, or the hero-gods of legend and song, "Nicor" the water-sprite who gave us our water-nixies and "Old Nick," "Weland" the forger of mighty shields and sharp-biting swords at a later time in his Berkshire "Weyland's smithy," or Ægil, the hero-archer, whose legend is that of Cloudesly or Tell. A nature worship of this sort lent itself ill to the purposes of a priesthood, and though a priestly class existed it

Digitized by Google

seems at no time to have had much weight in the English society. As every freeman was his own judge and his own legislator, so he was his own house priest; and the common English worship lay in the sacrifice which he offered to the god of his hearth.

From Sleswick and the shores of the Northern Sea we must pass, before opening our story, to a land which, dear as it is now to Englishmen, had not as yet been trodden by English feet. The island of Britain had for nearly four hundred years been a province of the Empire. A descent of Julius Cæsar revealed it (B.C. 54) to the Roman world, but nearly a century elapsed before the Emperor Claudius attempted its definite conquest. The victories of Julius Agricola (A.D. 78—84) carried the Roman frontier to the Friths of Forth and of Clyde, and the work of Roman civilization followed hard upon the Roman sword. The conquered population was grouped in great cities such as York or Lincoln, cities governed by their own municipal officers, guarded by massive walls, and linked together by a network of magnificent roads, which extended from one end of the island to the other. Commerce sprang up in ports like that of London; agriculture flourished till Britain became one of the great corn-exporting countries of the world; its mineral resources were explored in the tin mines of Cornwall, the lead mines of Somerset, the iron mines of Northumberland and the Forest of Dean. The wealth of the island grew fast during centuries of unbroken peace, but the evils which were slowly sapping the strength of the Roman Empire at large must have told heavily on the real wealth of the province of Britain. Here, as in Italy or Gaul, the population probably declined as the estates of the landed proprietors grew larger, and the cultivators sank into serfs whose cabins clustered round the luxurious villas of their lords. The mines, if worked by forced labour, must have been a source of endless oppression. Town and country were alike crushed by heavy taxation, while industry was checked by a system of trade guilds which confined each occupation to an hereditary caste. Above all, the purely despotic system of the Roman Government, by crushing all local independence, crushed all local vigour. Men forgot how to fight for their country when they forgot how to govern it.

Such causes of decay were common to every province of the Empire; but there were others that sprang from the peculiar circumstances of Britain itself. The island was weakened by a disunion within, which arose from the partial character of its civilization. It was only in the towns that the conquered Britons became entirely Romanized. The tribes of the rural districts seem to have remained apart, speaking their own tongue, and owning some traditional allegiance to their native chiefs. The use of the Roman language may be taken as marking the progress of Roman civilization, and though Latin had wholly superseded the language of the conquered peoples in Spain or Gaul, its use seems to

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.

BRITAIN AND THE ENGLISH.

have been confined in Britain to the inhabitants of the towns. It was this disunion that was revealed by the peculiar nature of the danger which threatened Britain from the North. The Picts were simply Britons who had been sheltered from Roman conquest by the fastnesses of the Highlands, and who were at last roused in their turn to attack by the weakness of the province and the hope of plunder. Their invasions penetrated to the heart of the island. Raids so extensive could hardly have been effected without help from within, and the dim history of the time allows us to see not merely an increase of disunion between the Romanized and un-Romanized population of Britain, but even an alliance between the last and their free kinsfolk, the Picts. The struggles of Britain, however, lingered on till dangers nearer home forced the Empire to recall its legions and leave the province to itself. Ever since the birth of Christ the countries which lay round the Mediterranean Sea, and which then comprehended the whole of the civilized world, had rested in peace beneath the rule of Rome. During four hundred years its frontier had held at bay the barbarian world without—the Parthian of the Euphrates, the Numidian of the African desert, the German of the Danube or the Rhine. It was this mass of savage barbarism that at last broke in on the Empire at a time when its force was sapped by internal decay. In the Western dominions of Rome the triumph of the invaders was complete. The Franks conquered and colonized Gaul, the West-Goths conquered and colonized Spain, the Vandals founded a kingdom in Africa, the Burgundians encamped in the border-land between Italy and the Rhone, the East-Goths ruled at last in Italy itself.

**Britain and the English.**

It was to defend Italy against the Goths that Rome in 411 recalled her legions from Britatn, and though she purposed to send them back again when the danger was over, the moment for their return never came. The province, thus left unaided, seems to have fought bravely against its assailants, and once at least to have driven back the Picts to their mountains in a rising of despair. But the threat of fresh inroads found Britain torn with civil quarrels which made a united resistance impossible, while its Pictish enemies strengthened themselves by a league with marauders from Ireland (Scots as they were then called), whose pirate-boats were harrying the western coast of the island, and with a yet more formidable race of pirates who had long been pillaging along the British Channel. These were the English. We do not know whether it was the pressure of other tribes or the example of their German brethren who were now moving in a general attack on the Empire from their forest homes, or simply the barrenness of their coast, which drove the hunters, farmers, fishermen, of the three English tribes to sea. But the daring spirit of their race already broke out in the secresy and suddenness of their swoop, in the fierceness of their onset, in the careless glee with which they seized

Digitized by Google

either sword or oar. "Foes are they," sang a Roman poet of the time, 'fierce beyond other foes, and cunning as they are fierce: the sea is their school of war, and the storm their friend; they are sea-wolves that live on the pillage of the world." To meet the league of Pict, Scot, and Englishman by the forces of the province itself became impossible; and the one course left was to imitate the fatal policy by which the Empire had invited its own doom while striving to avert it, the policy of matching barbarian against barbarian. The rulers of Britain resolved to break the league by detaching the English from it, and to use their new allies against the Pict. By the usual promises of land and pay, a band of English warriors were drawn for this purpose in 449 from Jutland, with their chiefs, Hengest and Horsa, at their head.

## Section II.—The English Conquest, 449—607.

[*Authorities for the Conquest of Britain.*—The only extant British account is that of the monk *Gildas*, diffuse and inflated, but valuable as the one authority for the state of the island at the time, and as giving, in the conclusion of his work, the native story of the conquest of Kent. I have examined his general character, and the objections to his authenticity, &c., in two papers in the *Saturday Review* for April 24 and May 8, 1869. The conquest of Kent is the only one of which we have any record from the side of the conquered. The English conquerors have left brief jottings of the conquest of Kent, Sussex, and Wessex, in the curious annals which form the opening of the compilation now known as the "English Chronicle." They are undoubtedly historic, though with a slight mythical intermixture. We possess no materials for the history of the English in their invasion of Mid-Britain or Mercia, and a fragment of the annals of Northumbria embodied in the later compilation which bears the name of Nennius alone throws light upon their actions in the North. Dr. Guest's papers in the "Transactions of the Archæological Institute" are the best modern narratives of the conquest.]

---

**The English in Thanet.**

It is with the landing of Hengest and his war-band at Ebbsfleet on the shores of the Isle of Thanet that English history begins. No spot in Britain can be so sacred to Englishmen as that which first felt the tread of English feet. There is little indeed to catch the eye in Ebbsfleet itself, a mere lift of higher ground with a few grey cottages dotted over it, cut off now-a-days from the sea by a reclaimed meadow and a sea-wall. But taken as a whole the scene has a wild beauty of its own. To the right the white curve of Ramsgate cliffs looks down on the crescent of Pegwell Bay; far away to the left, across grey marsh levels, where smoke-wreaths mark the sites of Richborough and Sandwich, rises the dim cliff-line of Deal. Everything in the character of the spot confirms the national tradition which fixed here the first landing-place of our English fathers, for great as the

Digitized by Google

SEC. II. THE ENGLISH CONQUEST. 449-607.

physical changes of the country have been since the fifth century, they have told little on its main features. It is easy to discover in the misty level of the present Minster Marsh what was once a broad inlet of sea parting Thanet from the mainland of Britain, through which the pirate-boats of the first Englishmen came sailing with a fair wind to the little gravel-spit of Ebbsfleet; and Richborough, a fortress whose broken ramparts still rise above the grey flats which have taken the place of this older sea-channel, was the common landing-place of travellers from Gaul. If the war-ships of the English pirates therefore were cruising off the coast at the moment when the bargain with the Britons was concluded, their disembarkation at Ebbsfleet almost beneath the walls of Richborough would be natural enough. But the after-current of events serves to show that the choice of this landing-place was the result of a deliberate design. Between the Briton and his hireling soldiers there could be little mutual confidence. Quarters in Thanet would satisfy the followers of Hengest, who still lay in sight of their fellow-pirates in the Channel, and who felt themselves secured against the treachery which had so often proved fatal to the barbarian by the broad inlet which parted their camp from the mainland. Nor was the choice less satisfactory to the provincial, trembling—and, as the event proved, justly trembling—lest in his zeal against the Pict he had introduced an even fiercer foe into Britain. His dangerous allies were cooped up in a corner of the land, and parted from it by a sea-channel which was guarded by the strongest fortresses of the coast.

**The English Attack.**

The need of such precautions was soon seen in the disputes which arose as soon as the work for which the mercenaries had been hired was done. The Picts were hardly scattered to the winds in a great battle when danger came from the English themselves. Their numbers rapidly increased as the news of the settlement spread among the pirates of the Channel, and with the increase of their number increased the difficulty of supplying rations and pay. The long dispute which rose over these questions was at last closed by the English with a threat of war. The threat, however, as we have seen, was no easy one to carry out. When the English chieftains gave their voice for war, in 449, the inlet between Thanet and the mainland, traversable only at low water by a long and dangerous ford, and guarded at either mouth by the fortresses of Richborough and Reculver, stretched right across their path. The channels of the Medway and the Cray, with the great circle of the Weald, furnished further lines of defence in the rear, while around lay a population of soldiers, the military colonists of the coast, pledged by terms of feudal service to guard the shore against the barbarian. Great, however, as these difficulties were, they yielded before the suddenness of Hengest's onset. The harbour seems to have been crossed, the coast-road to London seized, before any force could be

Digitized by Google

collected to oppose the English; and it was only when they passed the vast potteries whose refuse still strews the mudbanks of the Medway that they found the river passage secured. The guarded walls of Rochester probably forced them to turn southwards along the ridge of low hills which forms the bound of its river-valley. Their march led them through a district full of memories of a past which had even then faded from the minds of men; for hill and hill-slope were the necropolis of a vanished race, and scattered among the boulders that strewed the ground rose the cromlechs and huge barrows of the dead. One such mighty relic survives in the monument now called Kits' Coty House, the close as it seems of a great sepulchral avenue which linked the graves around it with the grave-ground of Addington. The view of their first battle-field broke on the English warriors from a steep knoll on which the grey weather-beaten stones of this monument are reared, and a lane which still leads down from it through peaceful homesteads guided them across the river-valley to a little village named Aylesford, which marked the ford across the Medway. The chronicle of the conquest tells nothing of the rush that must have carried the ford, or of the fight that went struggling up through the village. It tells only that Horsa fell in the moment of victory; and the flint-heap of Horsted, which has long preserved his name, and was held in after time to mark his grave, is thus the earliest of those monuments of English valour of which Westminster is the last and noblest shrine.

**Extermination of the Britons.**

The victory of Aylesford did more than give East Kent to the English; it struck the key-note of the whole English conquest of Britain. The massacre which followed the battle indicated at once the merciless nature of the struggle which had begun. While the wealthier Kentish landowners fled in panic over sea, the poorer Britons took refuge in hill and forest till hunger drove them from their lurking-places to be cut down or enslaved by their conquerors. It was in vain that some sought shelter within the walls of their churches: for the rage of the English seems to have burned fiercest against the clergy. The priests were slain at the altar, the churches fired, the peasants driven by the flames to fling themselves on a ring of pitiless steel. It is a picture such as this which distinguishes the conquest of Britain from that of the other provinces of Rome. The conquest of Gaul by the Frank, or of Italy by the Lombard, proved little more than a forcible settlement of the one conqueror or the other among tributary subjects who were destined in a long course of ages to absorb their conquerors. French is the tongue not of the Frank but of the Gaul whom he overcame; and the fair hair of the Lombard is now all but unknown in Lombardy. But the English conquest was a sheer dispossession and slaughter of the people whom the English conquered. In all the world-wide struggle between Rome and the German invaders

Digitized by Google

SEC. II. THE ENGLISH CONQUEST. 449-607.

no land was so stubbornly fought for or so hardly won. The conquest of Britain was indeed only partly wrought out after two centuries of bitter warfare. But it was just through the long and merciless nature of the struggle that of all the German conquests this proved the most thorough and complete. At its close Britain had become England, a land that is, not of Britons, but of Englishmen. It is possible that a few of the vanquished people may have lingered as slaves round the homesteads of their English conquerors, and a few of their household words (if these were not brought in at a later time) mingled oddly with the English tongue. But doubtful exceptions such as these leave the main facts untouched. When the steady progress of English conquest was stayed for a while by civil wars of a century and a half after Aylesford, the Briton had disappeared from the greater part of the land which had been his own, and the tongue, the religion, the laws of his English conqueror reigned without a rival from Essex to the Severn, and from the British Channel to the Firth of Forth.

**The Conquest of Southern Britain.**

Aylesford, however, was but the first step in this career of conquest. How stubborn the contest was may be seen from the fact that it took sixty years to complete the conquest of Southern Britain alone. Kent passed slowly under the rule of Hengest. After a second defeat at the passage of the Cray, the Britons "forsook Kent-land and fled with much fear to London;" and, six years after Aylesford, the castles of the shore, Richborough, Dover, and Lymne, fell at last into English hands. But the greed of plunder drew fresh war-bands from the German coast. New invaders, drawn from among the Saxons, the 477. southern tribe of the English confederacy, were seen in 477, some twenty years later, pushing slowly along the strip of land which lay westward of Kent between the Weald and the sea. Nowhere has the physical aspect of the country been more utterly changed. The vast sheet of scrub, woodland, and waste which then bore the name of the Andredswold stretched for more than a hundred miles from the borders of Kent to the Hampshire Downs, extending northward almost to the Thames, and leaving only a thin strip of coast along its southern edge. This coast was guarded by a great fortress, which occupied the spot now called Pevensey, the future landing-place of the Norman Conqueror. The fall of this fortress of Anderida in 491 established the kingdom of the South-Saxons; "Ælle and Cissa," ran the pitiless record of the conquerors, "beset Anderida, and slew all that were therein, nor was there afterwards one Briton left." But the followers of Hengest or of Ælla had touched little more than the coast; and the true conquest of Southern Britain was reserved for a fresh band of Saxons, who struggled under Cerdic and Cymric up from Southampton Water in 495 to the great downs where Winchester offered so rich a prize. Five thousand Britons fell in a fight which opened the country to

Digitized by Google

these invaders, and a fresh victory at Charford in 519 set the crown of the West-Saxons on the head of Cerdic.

We know little of the incidents of these conquests; nor do we know why at this juncture they seem to have been suddenly interrupted. But it is certain that a victory of the Britons at Mount Badon in the year 520 not only checked the progress of the West-Saxons, but was followed by a general pause in the English advance. For nearly half a century the great belt of woodland which then curved round from Dorset to the valley of the Thames seems to have barred the way of the assailants. From London to the Firth of Forth, from the Fens to St. David's Head, the country still remained unconquered, and there was little in the long breathing-space to herald that second outbreak of the English race which really made Britain England. In the silence of this interval of rest we listen to the monotonous plaint of Gildas, the one writer whom Britain has left us, with a strange disappointment. Gildas had seen the English invasion, and it is to him we owe our knowledge of the English Conquest of Kent. But we look in vain to his book for any account of the life or settlement of the English conquerors. Across the border of the new England that was growing up along the southern shores of Britain, Gildas gives us but a glimpse—doubtless he had but a glimpse himself—of forsaken walls, of shrines polluted by heathen impiety. His silence and his ignorance mark the character of the struggle. No British neck had as yet bowed before the English invader, no British pen was to record his conquest. A century after their landing the English are still known to their British foes only as "barbarians," "wolves," "dogs," "whelps from the kennel of barbarism," "hateful to God and man." Their victories seemed victories of the powers of evil, chastisements of a divine justice for national sin. Their ravage, terrible as it had been, was held to be almost at an end: in another century—so ran old prophecies—their last hold on the land would be shaken off. But of submission to, or even of intercourse with the strangers, there is not a word. Gildas tells us nothing of their fortunes, or of their leaders.

**Gildas.**

In spite of his silence, however, we may still know something of the way in which the new English society grew up in the conquered country, for the extermination of the Briton was but the prelude to the settlement of his conqueror. What strikes us at once in the new England is, that it was the one purely German nation that rose upon the wreck of Rome. In other lands, in Spain, or Gaul, or Italy, though they were equally conquered by German peoples, religion, social life, administrative order, still remained Roman. In Britain alone Rome died into a vague tradition of the past. The whole organization of government and society disappeared with the people who used it. The villas, the mosaics, the coins which we dig up in our fields are no relics of our English fathers, but of a Roman world which our

**The English Settlement.**

Digitized by Google

SEC. II.
THE ENGLISH CONQUEST.
449
607.

fathers' sword swept utterly away. Its law, its literature, its manners, its faith, went with it. The new England was a heathen country. The religion of Woden and Thunder triumphed over the religion of Christ Alone among the German assailants of Rome, the English rejected th faith of the Empire they helped to overthrow. Elsewhere the Christian priesthood served as mediators between the barbarian and the conquered. Here the rage of the conquerors burnt fiercest again the clergy. River and homestead and boundary, the very days of the week, bore the names of the new gods who displaced Christ. But if England seemed for the moment a waste from which all the civilizatio of the world had fled away, it contained within itself the germs of nobler life than that which had been destroyed. The base of the new English society was the freeman whom we have seen tilling, judging, or sacrificing for himself in his far-off fatherland by the Norther Sea. However roughly he dealt while the struggle went on with the material civilization of Britain, it was impossible that such a man could be a mere destroyer. War was no sooner over than the warrior settle down into the farmer, and the home of the peasant churl rose besid the heap of goblin-haunted stones that marked the site of the villa he had burnt. The English kinsfolk settled in groups over the conquered country, as the lot fell to each, no longer kinsfolk only but dwellers i the same plot, knit together by their common holding within the same bounds. Each little village-commonwealth lived the same life in Britain as its farmers had lived at home. Each had its moot hi or sacred tree as a centre, its "mark" as a border; each judged by witness of the kinsfolk and made laws in the assembly of its wise men, and chose its own leaders among the "eorls" for peace or war.

**England and the Conquest.**

In two ways only was this primitive organization of English societ affected by its transfer to the soil of Britain. War begat the King. It is probable that the English had hitherto known nothing of kings in their own fatherland, where each small tribe lived under th rule of its own chosen Ealdorman. But in a war such as that which they waged against the Britons it was necessary to find a common leader whom the various tribes engaged in conquering Kent or Wessex might follow, and such a leader soon rose into a higher position tha that of a temporary chief. The sons of Hengest became kings in Kent, those of Ælla in Sussex. The West-Saxons have left a record of the solemn election by which they chose Cerdic for their king. Such a choice at once drew the various villages and tribes of each communit closer together than of old, while the usage which gave all unoccupied or common ground to the new ruler enabled him to surround himself with a chosen war-band of companions, servants, or "thegns" as the were called, who were rewarded for their service by gifts from it, and who at last became a nobility which superseded the "eorlas" of the original English constitution. And as war begat the King and the

Digitized by Google

military noble, so it all but begat the slave. There had always been a slave class, a class of the unfree, among the English as among all German peoples; but the numbers of this class, if unaffected by the conquest of Britain, were swelled by the wars which soon sprang up among the English conquerors. No rank saved the prisoner taken in battle from the doom of slavery, and slavery itself was often welcomed as saving the prisoner from death. We see this in the story of a noble warrior who had fallen wounded in a fight between two English tribes, and was carried as a bond-slave to the house of a thegn hard by. He declared himself a peasant, but his master penetrated the disguise. "You deserve death," he said, "since all my brothers and kinsfolk fell in the fight," but for his oath's sake he spared his life and sold him to a Frisian at London. The Frisian was probably a merchant, such as those who were carrying English captives at that time to the market-place of Rome. But war was not the only cause of the increase of this slave class. The number of the "unfree" were swelled by debt and crime. Famine drove men to "bend their heads in the evil days for meat;" the debtor unable to discharge his debt flung on the ground the freeman's sword and spear, took up the labourer's mattock, and placed his head as a slave within a master's hands. The criminal whose kinsfolk would not make up his fine became the crime-serf of the plaintiff or the king. Sometimes a father, pressed by need, sold children and wife into bondage. The slave became part of the live-stock of the estate, to be willed away at death with the horse or the ass, whose pedigree was kept as carefully as his own. His children were bondsmen like himself; even the freeman's children by a slave-mother inherited the mother's taint. "Mine is the calf that is born of my cow," ran the English proverb. The cabins of the unfree clustered round the home of the freeman as they had clustered round the villa of the Roman gentleman; ploughman, shepherd, goatherd, swineherd, oxherd and cowherd, dairymaid, barnman, sower, hayward and woodward, were alike serfs. It was not such a slavery as that we have known in modern times, for stripes and bonds were rare; if the slave were slain, it was by an angry blow, not by the lash. But his lord could slay him if he would; it was but a chattel the less. The slave had no place in the justice-court, no kinsman to claim vengeance for the wrong. If a stranger slew him, his lord claimed the damages; if guilty of wrong-doing, "his skin paid for him" under the lash. If he fled he might be chased like a strayed beast, and flogged to death for his crime, or burned to death if the slave were a woman.

**The Second English Advance.**

The halt of the English conquerors after the battle of Mount Badon was no very long one, for even while Gildas was writing, the Britons seem to have been driven from the eastern coast by a series of descents whose history is lost. The invaders who thus became masters of the

Digitized by Google

SEC. II. THE ENGLISH CONQUEST. 449-607.

wolds of Lincolshire, and of the great district which was cut off from the rest of Britain by the Wash and the Fens, were drawn from that tribe of the English confederacy which, as we have seen, bore especially the name of Englishmen, as those of South Britain had been drawn from its Saxon tribe, and those of Kent from its Jutish. On the Wolds they were known as Lindiswaras, in the Fens as Gyrwas; on the coast as North-folk and South-folk, names still preserved to us in the counties where they settled. The district round London, on the other hand was won and colonized by men of Saxon blood—the Middle-Sexe and East-Sexe or Essex. It may have been the success of these landings on the eastern coast that roused the West-Saxons of the southern coast to a new advance. Their capture of the hill-fort of Old Sarum in 55. threw open the reaches of the Wiltshire Downs; and pushing along the upper valley of Avon to a new battle at Barbury Hill, they swooped at last from their uplands on the rich prey that lay along the Severn. Gloucester, Cirencester, and Bath, cities which had leagued under their British kings to resist this onset, became the spoil of an English victory at Deorham in 577, and the line of the great western river lay open to the arms of the conquerors. Once the West-Saxons penetrated to the borders of Chester, and Uriconium, a town beside the Wrekin, recently brought again to light, went up in flames. A British poet sings piteously the death-song of Uriconium, "the white town in the valley," the town of white stone gleaming among the green woodland, the hall of its chieftain left "without fire, without light, without songs," the silence broken only by the eagle's scream, the eagle who "has swallowed fresh drink, heart's blood of Kyndylan the fair." The raid, however, was repulsed; and the West-Saxons, who seem to have been turned to the east by the difficulty of forcing the fastnesses of the forest of Arden, penetrated into the valley of the Thames. A march of their King Cuthwulf's made them masters in 571 of the districts which now form Oxfordshire and Berkshire; and their advance along the river upon London promised them the foremost place among the conquerors of Britain. But though Wessex was fated in the end to win overlordship over every English people, its time had not come yet; and the leadership of the English race was to fall for nearly a century into the hands of a tribe of invaders whose fortunes we have now to follow.

**Conquest of Mid-Britain and the North.**

Rivers were the natural inlets by which the Northern pirates everywhere made their way into the heart of Europe. In Britain the fortress of London barred their way along the Thames from its mouth, and drove them, as we have seen, to an advance along the southern coast and over the downs of Wiltshire, before reaching its upper waters. But the rivers which united in the estuary of the Humber led like open highways into the heart of Britain, and it was by this inlet that the great mass of the invaders penetrated into the interior of the

Digitized by Google

island. Like the invaders of the eastern coast, they were of the English tribe from Sleswick. One body, turned southward by the forest of Elmet, which covered the district around Leeds, followed the course of the Trent. Those who occupied the wooded country between the Trent and the Humber took, from their position, the name of Southumbrians. A second division, advancing along the curve of the former river, and creeping down the line of its tributary, the Soar, till they reached Leicester, became known as the Middle-English. The head waters of the Trent were the seat of those invaders who penetrated furthest to the west, and camped round Lichfield and Repton. This country became the border-land between Englishmen and Britons, and the settlers bore the name of "Mercians," men, that is, of the March or border. We know hardly anything of this conquest of Mid-Britain, and little more of the conquest of the North. Under the Romans political power had centred in the vast district between the Humber and the Forth. York had been the capital of Britain and the seat of the Roman prefect: and the bulk of the garrison maintained in the island lay cantoned along the Roman wall. Signs of wealth and prosperity appeared everywhere; cities rose beneath the shelter of the Roman camps; villas of British landowners studded the vale of the Ouse and the far-off uplands of the Tweed, where the shepherd trusted for security against Pictish marauders to the terror of the Roman name. This district was assailed at once from the north and from the south. A part of the invading force which entered the Humber marched over the Yorkshire wolds to found a kingdom, which was known as that of the Deiri, in the fens of Holderness and on the chalk downs westward of York. Ida and the men of fifty keels which followed him reared, in 547, the capital of a more northerly kingdom, that of Bernicia, on the rock of Bamborough, and won their way slowly along the coast against a stubborn resistance which formed the theme of British songs.

Æthelfrith.

Strife between these two kingdoms of Deira and Bernicia long hindered the full conquest of Northern Britain. They were at last united under Æthelfrith, a king of greater vigour than any we have seen yet in English history, and from their union was formed a new kingdom, the kingdom of Northumbria. Under Æthelfrith the work of conquest went on with wonderful rapidity. In 603 the forces of the Northern Britons were annihilated in a great battle at Dægsastan, and the rule of Northumbria established from the Humber to the Forth. Along the west of Britain there stretched the unconquered kingdoms of Strathclyde and Cumbria, which extended from the river Clyde to the Dee, and the smaller British states which occupied what we now call Wales. Chester formed the link between these two bodies: and it was Chester that Æthelfrith chose in 607 for his next point of attack. Hard by the city two thousand monks were gathered in the

Digitized by Google

SEC. III. THE NORTHUMBRIAN KINGDOM. 607-685.

monastery of Bangor, and after imploring in a three days' fast the help of Heaven for their country, a crowd of these ascetics followed the British army to the field. Æthelfrith watched the wild gestures and outstretched arms of the strange company as it stood apart, intent upon prayer, and took the monks for enchanters. "Bear they arms or no," said the king, "they war against us when they cry against us to their God," and in the surprise and rout which followed the monks were the first to fall.

607.

### Section III.—The Northumbrian Kingdom, 607—685.

[*Authorities.*—Bæda's "Historia Ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum" is the one primary authority for this period. I have spoken fully of it and its writer in the text. The meagre regnal and episcopal annals of the West-Saxons have been brought by copious insertions from Bæda to the shape in which they at present appear in the "English Chronicle." The Poem of Cædmon has been published by Mr. Thorpe, and copious summaries of it are given by Sharon Turner ("Hist. of Anglo-Saxons," vol. iii. cap. 3) and Mr. Morley ("English Writers," vol. i.) The life of Wilfrid by Eddi, and those of Cuthbert by Bæda and an earlier contemporary biographer, which are appended to Mr. Stevenson's edition of the "Historia Ecclesiastica," throw great light on the religious condition of the North. For Guthlac of Crowland, see the "Acta Sanctorum" for April xi. For Theodore, and the English Church which he organized, see Kemble ("Saxons in England," vol. ii. cap. 8—10), and above all the invaluable remarks of Professor Stubbs in his Constitutional History.]

---

Æthelbert.

THE British kingdoms were now utterly parted from one another. By their victory at Deorham the West-Saxons had cut off the Britons of Devon and Cornwall from the general body of their race. By his victory at Chester and the reduction of Lancashire which followed it, Æthelfrith broke this body again into two several parts. From this time, therefore, the character of the English conquest of Britain changes. It dies down into a warfare against the separate British provinces—West Wales, North Wales, and Cumbria, as they were called—which, though often interrupted, at last found its close in the victories of Edward the First. A far more important change was that which was seen in the attitude of the English conquerors from this time towards each other. Freed from the common pressure of the war against the Britons, their energies turned to combats with one another, to a long struggle for overlordship which was to end in bringing about a real national unity. In this struggle the lead was at once taken by Northumbria, which succeeded under Æthelfrith in establishing an overlordship, or claim to military supremacy and tribute, over the English tribes who were occupying Mid-Britain, the Southumbrians, Middle-English, and Mercians; and probably over the Lindiswaras of Lincolnshire. But a powerful rival appeared at this moment

Digitized by Google

in Kent. The kingdom of the Jutes rose suddenly into greatness under a king called Æthelberht, who established his supremacy over the Saxons of Middlesex and Essex, as well as over the English of East-Anglia as far north as the Wash; and drove back the West-Saxons, when, after an interval of civil feuds, they began again their advance along the Thames, and marched upon London.

**Landing of Augustine.**

The inevitable struggle between Kent and Northumbria was averted by the sudden death of Æthelfrith. Marching in 617 against Rædwald, king of East-Anglia, who had sheltered Eadwine, an exile from the Northumbrian kingdom, he perished in a defeat at the river Idle. Æthelberht, on the other hand, shewed less zeal for the widening of his overlordship than for a renewal of that intercourse of Britain with the Continent which had been broken off by the conquests of the English. His marriage with Bercta, the daughter of the Frankish king Charibert of Paris, created a fresh tie between Kent and Gaul. But the union had far more important results than those of which Æthelberht may have dreamed. Bercta, like her Frankish kinsfolk, was a Christian. A Christian bishop accompanied her from Gaul to Canterbury, the royal city of the kingdom of Kent; and a ruined Christian church, the Church of St. Martin, was given them for their worship. The marriage of Bercta was an opportunity which was at once seized by the bishop who at this time occupied the Roman See, and who is justly known as Gregory the Great. Years ago, when but a young deacon, Gregory had noted the white bodies, the fair faces, the golden hair of some youths who stood bound in the market-place of Rome. "From what country do these slaves come?" he asked the traders who brought them. "They are English, Angles!" the slave-dealers answered. The deacon's pity veiled itself in poetic humour. "Not Angles, but angels," he said, "with faces so angel-like! From what country come they?" "They come," said the merchants, "from Deira." "De irâ!" was the untranslateable reply; "aye, plucked from God's ire, and called to Christ's mercy! And what is the name of their king?" "Ælla," they told him; and Gregory seized on the word as of good omen. "Alle-luia shall be sung there," he cried, and passed on, musing how the angel-faces should be brought to sing it. Years went by, and the deacon had become Bishop of Rome, when Bercta's marriage gave him the opening he sought. He at once sent a Roman abbot, Augustine, at the head of a band of monks, to preach the Gospel to the English people. The missionaries landed in 597 on the very spot where Hengest had landed more than a century before in the Isle of Thanet; and the king received them sitting in the open air, on the chalk-down above Minster, where the eye now-a-days catches miles away over the marshes the dim tower of Canterbury. He listened to the long sermon as the interpreters whom Augustine had brought with him from Gaul



Digitized by Google

SEC. III. THE NORTHUMBRIAN KINGDOM. 607-685.

translated it. "Your words are fair," Æthelberht replied at last, with English good sense, "but they are new and of doubtful meaning;" for himself, he said, he refused to forsake the gods of his fathers, but he promised shelter and protection to the strangers. The band of monks entered Canterbury bearing before them a silver cross with a picture of Christ, and singing in concert the strains of the litany of their Church. "Turn from this city, O Lord," they sang, "Thine anger and wrath, and turn it from Thy holy house, for we have sinned." And then in strange contrast came the jubilant cry of the older Hebrew worship, the cry which Gregory had wrested in prophetic earnestness from the name of the Yorkshire king in the Roman market-place, "Alleluia!"

**Reunion of England and the Western World.**

It is strange that the spot which witnessed the landing of Hengest should be yet better known as the landing-place of Augustine. But the second landing at Ebbsfleet was in no small measure the reversal and undoing of the first. "Strangers from Rome" was the title with which the missionaries first fronted the English king. The march of the monks as they chaunted their solemn litany was, in one sense, the return of the Roman legions who had retired at the trumpet-call of Alaric. It was to the tongue and the thought, not of Gregory only, but of such men as his English fathers had slaughtered and driven over sea, that Æthelberht listened in the preaching of Augustine. Canterbury, the earliest royal city of German England, became the centre of Latin influence. The Latin tongue became again one of the tongues of Britain, the language of its worship, its correspondence, its literature. If poetry began at a later day in the English epic of Cædmon, prose took its first shape in the Latin history of Bæda. But more than the tongue of Rome returned with Augustine. Practically his landing renewed the union with the Western world which that of Hengest had destroyed. The new England was admitted into the older commonwealth of nations. The civilization, art, letters, which had fled before the sword of the English Conquest, returned with the Christian faith. The great fabric of the Roman law, indeed, never took root in England, but it is impossible not to recognize the result of the influence of the Roman missionaries in the fact that the codes of customary English law began to be put into writing soon after their arrival.

**Eadwine.**

As yet these great results were still distant; a year passed before even Æthelberht yielded, but from the moment of his conversion the new faith advanced rapidly. The Kentish men crowded to baptism in the Swale; the under-kings of Essex and East-Anglia received the creed of their overlord. A daughter of the Kentish king carried with her the missionary Paulinus to the Northumbrian court. Northumbria was now fast rising to a power which set all rivalry at defiance. Eadwine, whom we have seen in exile at Rædwald's court, mounted the Northumbrian throne on the fall of his enemy,

Digitized by Google

Æthelfrith, in 617; and asserted, like his predecessor, his lordship over the English of Mid-Britain. The submission of the East-Anglians and the East-Saxons after Æthelberht's death destroyed all dread of opposition from Kent; and the English conquerors of the south, the people of the West-Saxons, alone remained independent. But revolt and slaughter had fatally broken the power of the West-Saxons when the Northumbrians attacked them. A story preserved by Bæda tells something of the fierceness of the struggle which ended in the subjection of the south to the overlordship of Northumbria. Eadwine gave audience in an Easter-court, which he held in his royal city by the river Derwent, to Eumer, an envoy of Wessex, who brought a message from its king. In the midst of the conference the envoy started to his feet, drew a dagger from his robe, and rushed madly on the Northumbrian sovereign. Lilla, one of the king's war-band, threw himself between Eadwine and his assassin; but so furious was the stroke, that even through Lilla's body the dagger still reached its aim. The king, however, recovered from his wound to march on the West-Saxons; he slew and subdued all who had conspired against him, and returned victorious to his own country. The greatness of Northumbria now reached its height. Within his own dominions, Eadwine displayed a genius for civil government which shows how completely the mere age of conquest had passed away. With him began the English proverb so often applied to after kings: "A woman with her babe might walk scatheless from sea to sea in Eadwine's day." Peaceful communication revived along the deserted highways; the springs by the roadside were marked with stakes, and a cup of brass set beside each for the traveller's refreshment. Some faint traditions of the Roman past may have flung their glory round this new "Empire of the English;" some of its majesty had, at any rate, come back with its long-lost peace. A royal standard of purple and gold floated before Eadwine as he rode through the villages; a feather-tuft attached to a spear, the Roman tufa, preceded him as he walked through the streets. The Northumbrian king was in fact supreme over Britain as no king of English blood had been before. Northward his frontier reached the Forth, and was guarded by a city which bore his name, Edinburgh, Eadwine's burgh, the city of Eadwine. Westward, he was master of Chester, and the fleet he equipped there subdued the isles of Anglesey and Man. South of the Humber he was owned as overlord by the whole English race, save Kent: and Kent bound itself to him by giving him its king's daughter as a wife, a step which probably marked political subordination.

Sec. III. THE NORTHUMBRIAN KINGDOM. 607-685.

With the Kentish queen came Paulinus, one of Augustine's followers, whose tall stooping form, slender aquiline nose, and black hair falling round a thin worn face, were long remembered in the North; and the wise men of Northumbria gathered to deliberate on the new faith to

Conversion of Northumbria.



Digitized by Google

SEC. III. THE NORTHUMBRIAN KINGDOM. 607-685.

which Paulinus and his queen soon converted Eadwine. To finer minds its charm lay in the light it threw on the darkness which encompassed men's lives, the darkness of the future as of the past. "So seems the life of man, O king," burst forth an aged Ealdorman, "as a sparrow's flight through the hall when you are sitting at meat in winter-tide, with the warm fire lighted on the hearth, but the icy rain-storm without. The sparrow flies in at one door, and tarries for a moment in the light and heat of the hearth-fire, and then flying forth from the other vanishes into the wintry darkness whence it came. So tarries for a moment the life of man in our sight, but what is before it, what after it, we know not. If this new teaching tells us aught certainly of these, let us follow it." Coarser argument told on the crowd. "None of your people, Eadwine, have worshipped the gods more busily than I," said Coifi the priest, "yet there are many more favoured and more fortunate. Were these gods good for anything they would help their worshippers." Then leaping on horseback, he hurled his spear into the sacred temple which gave its name to Godmanham on the Derwent, and with the rest of the Witan embraced the religion of the king.

**The Heathen Struggle.**

But the faith of Woden and Thunder was not to fall without a struggle. Even in Kent a reaction against the new creed began with the death of Æthelberht. Rædwald of East-Anglia resolved to serve Christ and the older gods together: and a pagan and Christian altar fronted one another in the same royal temple. The young kings of the East-Saxons burst into the church where Mellitus, the Bishop of London, was administering the Eucharist to the people, crying, "Give us that white bread you gave to our father Saba," and on the bishop's refusal, drove him from their realm. The tide of reaction was checked for a time by Eadwine's conversion; until Mercia sprang into a sudden greatness as the champion of the heathen gods. Under Æthelfrith and Eadwine Mercia had submitted to the lordship of Northumbria; but its king, Penda, saw in the rally of the old religion a chance of winning back its independence. Alone, however, he was as yet no match for Northumbria. But the war of the English people with the Britons seems at this moment to have died down for a season, and Penda boldly broke through the barrier which had parted the two races till now, and allied himself with the Welsh king,
633. Cadwallon, in an attack on Eadwine. The armies met in 633 at Hatfield, and in the fight which followed Eadwine was defeated and slain. The victory was at once turned to profit by the ambition of Penda, while Northumbria was torn with the strifes which followed Eadwine's fall. Penda united to his own Mercians of the Upper Trent the Middle English of Leicester, the Southumbrians, and the Lindiswaras: and was soon strong enough to tear from the West-Saxons their possessions along the Severn. So thoroughly was the

Digitized by Google

union of these provinces effected, that though some were detached for a time after Penda's death, the name of Mercia from this moment must be generally taken as covering the whole of them. But his work in Middle England gave Northumbria time to rise again under a new king, Oswald. The Welsh had remained encamped in the heart of the North, and Oswald's first fight was with Cadwallon. A small Northumbrian force gathered in 635 under their new king near the Roman Wall, and set up the Cross as their standard. Oswald held it with his own hands till the hollow in which it was to stand was filled in by his soldiers; then throwing himself on his knees, he cried to his army to pray to the living God. Cadwallon fell fighting on the "Heaven's Field," as after times called the field of battle, and for nine years the power of Oswald equalled that of Æthelfrith and Eadwine. 635.

**The Irish Church.**

It was not the Church of Paulinus which nerved Oswald to this struggle for the Cross. Paulinus had fled from Northumbria at Eadwine's fall; and the Roman Church in Kent shrank into inactivity before the heathen reaction. Its place in the conversion of England was taken by missionaries from Ireland. To understand, however, the true meaning of the change, we must remember that before the landing of the English in Britain, the Christian Church comprised every country, save Germany, in Western Europe, as far as Ireland itself. The conquest of Britain by the pagan English thrust a wedge of heathendom into the heart of this great communion, and broke it into two unequal parts. On the one side lay Italy, Spain, and Gaul, whose churches owned obedience to the See of Rome, on the other the Church of Ireland. But the condition of the two portions of Western Christendom was very different. While the vigour of Christianity in Italy and Gaul and Spain was exhausted in a bare struggle for life, Ireland, which remained unscourged by invaders, drew from its conversion an energy such as it has never known since. Christianity had been received there with a burst of popular enthusiasm, and letters and arts sprang up rapidly in its train. The science and Biblical knowledge which fled from the Continent took refuge in famous schools which made Durrow and Armagh the universities of the West. The new Christian life soon beat too strongly to brook confinement within the bounds of Ireland itself. Patrick, the first missionary of the island, had not been half a century dead when Irish Christianity flung itself with a fiery zeal into battle with the mass of heathenism which was rolling in upon the Christian world. Irish missionaries laboured among the Picts of the Highlands and among the Frisians of the northern seas. An Irish missionary, Columban, founded monasteries in Burgundy and the Apennines. The canton of St. Gall still commemorates in its name another Irish missionary before whom the spirits of flood and fell fled wailing over

Digitized by Google

SEC. III.
THE NORTHUMBRIAN KINGDOM.
607-685.
Oswald.
635—642.

the waters of the Lake of Constance. For a time it seemed as if the course of the world's history was to be changed, as if the older Celtic race that Roman and German had swept before them had turned to the moral conquest of their conquerors, as if Celtic and not Latin Christianity was to mould the destinies of the Churches of the West.

It was possibly the progress of the Irish Columban at her very doors which roused into new life for a time the energies of Rome, and spurred Gregory to attempt the conversion of the English in Britain. But, as we have seen, the ardour of the Roman mission in Kent soon sank into reaction; and again the Church of Ireland came forward to supply its place. On a low island of barren gneiss-rock off the west coast of Scotland, another Irish refugee, Columba, had raised the famous monastery of Iona. Oswald in youth found refuge within its walls, and on his accession to the throne of Northumbria he called for missionaries from among its monks. The first despatched in answer to his call obtained little success. He declared on his return that among a people so stubborn and barbarous success was impossible. "Was it their stubbornness, or your severity?" asked Aidan, a brother sitting by; "did you forget God's word to give them the milk first and then the meat?" All eyes turned on the speaker as fittest to undertake the abandoned mission, and Aidan sailing at their bidding fixed his episcopal see in the island-peninsula of Lindisfarne. Thence, from the monastery which gave to the spot its after name of Holy Island, preachers poured forth over the heathen realms. Chad went to the conversion of the Mercians, Boisil guided a little troop of missionaries to Melrose, Aidan himself wandered on foot, with the king as his interpreter, preaching among the peasants of Yorkshire and Northumbria. The reception of the new faith in the surrounding kingdoms became the mark of their submission to Oswald's overlordship. A preacher from Gaul, Birinus, had already penetrated into pagan Wessex, and in Oswald's presence its king received baptism, and established with his assent the see of Southern Britain in the royal city of Dorchester. Oswald ruled as wide a realm as his predecessor; but for after times the memory of his greatness was lost in the legends of his piety. A new conception of kingship began to blend itself with that of the warlike glory of Æthelfrith, or the wise administration of Eadwine. The moral power which was to reach its height in Ælfred first dawns in the story of Oswald. He wandered, as we have said, as Aidan's interpreter in his long mission journeys. "By reason of his constant habit of praying or giving thanks to the Lord, he was wont wherever he sat to hold his hands upturned on his kness." As he feasted with Bishop Aidan by his side, the thegn, or noble of his war-band, whom he had set to give alms to the poor at his gate, told him of a multitude that still waited fasting without. The king at once bade the untasted meat

Digitized by Google

before him be carried to the poor, and his silver dish be divided piecemeal among them. Aidan seized the royal hand and blessed it. "May this hand," he cried, "never grow old!"

Prisoned, however, as it was by the conversion of Wessex to the central districts of England, heathendom fought desperately for life. Penda was still its rallying point. His long reign in fact was one continuous battle with the Cross. We do not know why he looked idly on while Oswald reasserted his overlordship over Wessex, but the submission of East-Anglia to the Northumbrian rule forced him to a fresh contest. East-Anglia had long before become Christian, but the oddly mingled religion of its first Christian king, Rædwald, died into mere superstition in his successors. Its present king, Sigebert, left his throne for a monastery before the war began, but his people dragged him again from his cell on the news of Penda's invasion, in faith that his presence would bring them the favour of Heaven. The monk-king was set in the fore-front of the battle, but he would bear no weapon but a wand, and his fall was followed by the rout of his army and the submission of his kingdom to the invader. In 642 Oswald marched to deliver East-Anglia from Penda; but in a battle called the battle of the Maserfeld he was overthrown and slain. His body was mutilated, and its limbs set on stakes by the brutal conqueror; but legend told that when all else of Oswald had perished, the "white hand" that Aidan had blest still remained white and uncorrupted. For a few years after his victory at Maserfeld, Penda stood supreme in Britain. Wessex owned his overlordship as it had owned that of Oswald, and its king threw off the Christian faith and married Penda's sister. Northumbria alone, though distracted by civil war between rival claimants for its throne, refused to yield. Year by year Penda carried his ravages over the north; once he reached even the royal city, the impregnable rock-fortress of Bamborough. Despairing of success in an assault, he pulled down the cottages around, and piling their wood against its walls, fired the mass in a fair wind that drove the flames on the town. "See, Lord, what ill Penda is doing," cried Aidan from his hermit cell in the islet of Farne, as he saw the smoke drifting over the city, and a change of wind—so ran the legend of Northumbria's agony—drove back at the words the flames on those who kindled them. But in spite of Penda's victories, the faith which he had so often struck down revived everywhere around him. Burnt and harried as it was, Northumbria still fought for the Cross. Wessex quietly became Christian again. Penda's own son, whom he had set over the Middle-English, received baptism and teachers from Lindisfarne. At last the missionaries of the new faith appeared fearlessly among the Mercians themselves. Heathen to the last, Penda stood by unheeding if any were willing to hear; hating and despising with a certain grand sincerity of nature "those whom he saw not doing the works of the faith they had received."

Penda.

642.

Digitized by Google

SEC. III.
THE NORTHUMBRIAN KINGDOM.
607-685.

Northumbrian overlordship again followed in the track of Northumbrian missionaries along the eastern coast, and the old man roused himself for a last stroke at his foes. Oswi had at length been accepted as its sovereign by all Northumbria, and in 655 he met the pagan host in the field of Winwœd by Leeds. It was in vain that the Northumbrians sought to avert Penda's attack by offers of ornaments and costly gifts. "If the pagans will not accept them," Oswi cried at last, "let us offer them to One that will;" and he vowed that if successful he would dedicate his daughter to God, and endow twelve monasteries in his realm. Victory at last declared for the faith of Christ. The river over which the Mercians fled was swollen with a great rain; it swept away the fragments of the heathen host, and the cause of the older gods was lost for ever.

655.

Oswi.
642—670.

The terrible struggle between heathendom and Christianity was followed by a long and profound peace. For three years after the battle of Winwœd Mercia was governed by Northumbrian thegns in Oswi's name: and though a general rising of the people threw off their yoke, and set Penda's son Wulfere on its throne, it still owned the Northumbrian overlordship. Its heathendom was dead with Penda. "Being thus freed," Bæda tells us, "the Mercians with their king rejoiced to serve the true King, Christ." Its three provinces, the earlier Mercia, the Middle-English, and the Lindiswaras, were united in the bishopric of Ceadda, the St. Chad to whom Lichfield is still dedicated. Ceadda was a monk of Lindisfarne, so simple and lowly in temper that he travelled on foot on his long mission journeys, till Archbishop Theodore with his own hands lifted him on horseback. The old Celtic poetry breaks out in his death-legend, as it tells us how voices of singers singing sweetly descended from heaven to the little cell beside St. Mary's Church where the bishop lay dying. Then "the same song ascended from the roof again, and returned heavenward by the way that it came." It was the soul of his brother, the missionary Cedd, come with a choir of angels to solace the last hours of Ceadda. In Northumbria the work of his fellow missionaries has almost been lost in the glory of Cuthbert. No story better lights up for us the new religious life of the time than the story of this Apostle of the Lowlands. It carries us at its outset into northern Northumbria, the older Bernicia, the country of the Teviot and the Tweed. Born on the southern edge of the Lammermoor, Cuthbert found shelter at eight years old in a widow's house in the little village of Wrangholm. Already in youth there was a poetic sensibility beneath the robust frame of the boy which caught even in the chance word of a game a call to higher things. Later on, a traveller coming in his white mantle over the hillside, and stopping his horse to tend Cuthbert's injured knee, seemed to him an angel. The boy's shepherd life carried him to the bleak upland, still famous as a sheepwalk, though the scant herbage

Digitized by Google

scarce veils the whinstone rock, and there meteors plunging into the night became to him a company of angelic spirits, carrying the soul of Bishop Aidan heavenward. Slowly Cuthbert's longings settled into a resolute will towards a religious life, and he made his way at last to a group of log-shanties in the midst of untilled solitudes, where a few Irish monks from Lindisfarne had settled in the mission-station of Melrose. To-day the land is a land of poetry and romance. Cheviot and Lammermoor, Ettrick and Teviotdale, Yarrow and Annan-water, are musical with old ballads and border minstrelsy. Agriculture has chosen its valleys for her favourite seat, and drainage and steam-power have turned sedgy marshes into farm and meadow. But to see the Lowlands as they were in Cuthbert's day we must sweep meadow and farm away again, and replace them by vast solitudes, dotted here and there with clusters of wooden hovels, and crossed by boggy tracks, over which travellers rode spear in hand and eye kept cautiously about them. The Northumbrian peasantry among whom he journeyed were for the most part Christians only in name. With Teutonic indifference, they yielded to their thegns in nominally accepting the new Christianity as these had yielded to the king. But they retained their old superstitions side by side with the new worship; plague or mishap drove them back to a reliance on their heathen charms and amulets; and if trouble befell the Christian preachers who came settling among them, they took it as proof of the wrath of the older gods. When some logs which were floating down the Tyne for the construction of an abbey at its mouth drifted with the monks who were at work on them out to sea, the rustic bystanders shouted, "Let nobody pray for them; let nobody pity these men, who have taken away from us our old worship; and how their new-fangled customs are to be kept nobody knows." On foot, on horseback, Cuthbert wandered among listeners such as these, choosing above all the remoter mountain villages from whose roughness and poverty other teachers turned aside. Unlike his Irish comrades, he needed no interpreter as he passed from village to village; the frugal, long-headed Northumbrians listened willingly to one who was himself a peasant of the Lowlands, and who had caught the rough Northumbrian burr along the banks of the Leader. His patience, his humorous good sense, the sweetness of his look, told for him, and not less the stout vigorous frame which fitted the peasant-preacher for the hard life he had chosen. "Never did man die of hunger who served God faithfully," he would say, when nightfall found them supperless in the waste. "Look at the eagle overhead! God can feed us through him if He will"—and once at least he owed his meal to a fish that the scared bird let fall. A snowstorm drove his boat on the coast of Fife. "The snow closes the road along the shore," mourned his comrades; "the storm bars our way over sea." "There is still the way of heaven that lies open," said Cuthbert.

Digitized by Google

SEC. III.
THE NORTHUMBRIAN KINGDOM.
607-685.

While missionaries were thus labouring among its peasantry, Northumbria saw the rise of a host of monasteries, not bound indeed by the strict ties of the Benedictine rule, but gathered on the loose Celtic model of the family or the clan round some noble and wealthy person who sought devotional retirement.

**Cædmon.** 664.

The most notable and wealthy of these houses was that of Streonoshalh, where Hild, a woman of royal race, reared her abbey on the summit of the dark cliffs of Whitby, looking out over the Northern Sea. Whitby became the Westminster of the Northumbrian kings; within its walls stood the tombs of Eadwine and of Oswi, with nobles and queens grouped around them. Hild was herself a Northumbrian Deborah, whose counsel was sought even by bishops and kings; and the double monastery over which she ruled became a seminary of bishops and priests. The sainted John of Beverley was among her scholars. But the name which really throws glory over Whitby is the name of a cowherd from whose lips during the reign of Oswi flowed the first great English song. Though well advanced in years, Cædmon had learnt nothing of the art of verse, the alliterative jingle so common among his fellows, "wherefore being sometimes at feasts, when all agreed for glee's sake to sing in turn, he no sooner saw the harp come towards him than he rose from the board and turned homewards. Once when he had done thus, and gone from the feast to the stable where he had that night charge of the cattle, there appeared to him in his sleep One who said, greeting him by name, 'Sing, Cædmon, some song to Me.' 'I cannot sing,' he answered; 'for this cause left I the feast and came hither.' He who talked with him answered, 'However that be, you shall sing to Me.' 'What shall I sing?' rejoined Cædmon. 'The beginning of created things,' replied He. In the morning the cowherd stood before Hild and told his dream. Abbess and brethren alike concluded 'that heavenly grace had been conferred on him by the Lord.' They translated for Cædmon a passage in Holy Writ, 'bidding him, if he could, put the same into verse.' The next morning he gave it them composed in excellent verse, whereon the abbess, understanding the divine grace in the man, bade him quit the secular habit and take on him the monastic life." Piece by piece the sacred story was thus thrown into Cædmon's poem. "He sang of the creation of the world, of the origin of man, and of all the history of Israel; of their departure from Egypt and entering into the Promised Land; of the incarnation, passion, and resurrection of Christ, and of His ascension; of the terror of future judgment, the horror of hell-pangs, and the joys of heaven."

**English song.**

To men of that day this sudden burst of song seemed a thing necessarily divine. "Others after him strove to compose religious poems, but none could vie with him, for he learnt not the art of poetry from men, nor of men, but from God." It was not that any revolution

Digitized by Google

had been wrought by Cædmon in the outer form of English song, as it had grown out of the stormy life of the pirates of the sea. The war-song still remained the true type of English verse, a verse without art or conscious development or the delight that springs from reflection, powerful without beauty, obscured by harsh metaphors and involved construction, but eminently the verse of warriors, the brief passionate expression of brief passionate emotions. Image after image, phrase after phrase, in these early poems, starts out vivid, harsh, and emphatic. The very metre is rough with a sort of self-violence and repression; the verses fall like sword-strokes in the thick of battle. Hard toilers, fierce fighters, with huge appetites whether for meat or the ale-bowl, the one breath of poetry that quickened the animal life of the first Englishman was the poetry of war. But the faith of Christ brought in, as we have seen, new realms of fancy. The legends of the heavenly light, Bæda's story of "The Sparrow," show the side of English temperament to which Christianity appealed—its sense of the vague, vast mystery of the world and of man, its dreamy revolt against the narrow bounds of experience and life. It was this new poetic world which combined with the old in the epic of Cædmon. In the song of the Whitby cowherd the vagueness and daring of the Teutonic imagination float out beyond the limits of the Hebrew story to a "swart hell without light and full of flame," swept only at dawn by the icy east wind, on whose floor lie bound the apostate angels. The human energy of the German race, its sense of the might of individual manhood, transformed in Cædmon's verse the Hebrew Tempter into a rebel Satan, disdainful of vassalage to God. "I may be a God as He," Satan cries amidst his torments. "Evil it seems to me to cringe to Him for any good." Even in this terrible outburst of the fallen spirit, we catch the new pathetic note which the Northern melancholy was to give to our poetry. "This is to me the chief of sorrow, that Adam, wrought of earth, should hold my strong seat—should joy in our torment. Oh, that for one winter's space I had power with my hands, then with this host I—but around me lie the iron bonds, and this chain galls me." On the other hand, the enthusiasm for the Christian God, faith in whom had been bought so dearly by years of desperate struggle, breaks out in long rolls of sonorous epithets of praise and adoration. The temper of Cædmon brings him near to the earlier fire and passion of the Hebrew, as the history of his time brought him near to the old Bible history, with its fights and wanderings. "The wolves sing their horrid evensong; the fowls of war, greedy of battle, dewy feathered, scream around the host of Pharaoh," as wolf howled and eagle screamed round the host of Penda. Everywhere Cædmon is a type of the new grandeur, depth, and fervour of tone which the German race was to give to the religion of the East.

Synod of Whitby.

But even while Cædmon was singing, the Christian Church of North-

Digitized by Google

SEC. III. THE NORTHUMBRIAN KINGDOM. 607 685.

umbria was torn in two by a strife, whose issue was decided in the same abbey of Whitby where the cowherd dwelt. The labour of Aidan, the victories of Oswald and Oswi, seemed to have annexed England to the Irish Church. The monks of Lindisfarne, or of the new religious houses whose foundation followed that of Lindisfarne, looked for their ecclesiastical tradition, not to Rome but to Ireland; and quoted for their guidance the instructions, not of Gregory, but of Columba. Whatever claims of supremacy over the whole English Church might be pressed by the see of Canterbury, the real metropolitan of the Church as it existed in the North of England was the Abbot of Iona. But Rome was already moving to regain the ground she had lost, and her efforts were seconded by those of two men whose love of Rome mounted to a passionate fanaticism. The life of Wilfrith of York was a mere series of flights to Rome and returns to England, of wonderful successes in pleading the right of Rome to the obedience of the Church of Northumbria, and of as wonderful defeats. Benedict Biscop worked towards the same end in a quieter fashion, coming backwards and forwards across sea with books and relics and cunning masons and painters to rear a great church and monastery at Wearmouth, whose brethren owned obedience to the Roman See. The strife between the two parties rose so high at last that Oswi was prevailed upon to summon in 664 a great council at Whitby, where the future ecclesiastical allegiance of England should be decided. The points actually contested were trivial enough. Colman, Aidan's successor at Holy Island, pleaded for the Irish fashion of the tonsure, and for the Irish time of keeping Easter: Wilfrith pleaded for the Roman. The one disputant appealed to the authority of Columba, the other to that of St. Peter. "You own," cried the puzzled king at last to Colman, "that Christ gave to Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven—has He given such power to Columba?" The Bishop could but answer "No." "Then will I rather obey the porter of heaven," said Oswi, "lest when I reach its gates he who has the keys in his keeping turn his back on me, and there be none to open." The importance of Oswi's judgment was never doubted at Lindisfarne, where Colman, followed by the whole of the Irish-born brethren, and thirty of their English fellows, forsook the see of St. Aidan, and sailed away to Iona. Trivial, in fact, as were the actual points of difference which severed the Roman Church from the Irish, the question to which communion Northumbria should belong was of immense moment to the after fortunes of England. Had the Church of Aidan finally won, the later ecclesiastical history of England would probably have resembled that of Ireland. Devoid of that power of organization which was the strength of the Roman Church, the Celtic Church in its own Irish home took the clan system of the country as the basis of church government. Tribal quarrels and ecclesiastical controversies became inextricably confounded; and the clergy, robbed of all really spiritual

Digitized by Google

influence, contributed no element save that of disorder to the state. Hundreds of wandering bishops, a vast religious authority wielded by hereditary chieftains, the dissociation of piety from morality, the absence of those larger and more humanizing influences which contact with a wider world alone can give, this is the picture which the Irish Church of later times presents to us. It was from such a chaos as this that England was saved by the victory of Rome in the Synod of Whitby.

Theodore 668—690.

The Church of England, as we know it to-day, is the work, so far as its outer form is concerned, of a Greek monk, Theodore of Tarsus, whom Rome in 668 despatched after her victory at Whitby to secure England to her sway, as Archbishop of Canterbury. Theodore's work was determined in its main outlines by the previous history of the English people. The conquest of the Continent had been wrought either by races such as the Goths, which were already Christian, or by heathens like the Franks, who bowed to the Christian faith of the nations they conquered. To this oneness of religion between the German invaders of the Empire and their Roman subjects was owing the preservation of all that survived of the Roman world. The Church everywhere remained untouched. The Christian bishop became the defender of the conquered Italian or Gaul against his Gothic and Lombard conqueror, the mediator between the German and his subjects, the one bulwark against barbaric violence and oppression. To the barbarian, on the other hand, he was the representative of all that was venerable in the past, the living record of law, of letters, and of art. But in Britain the priesthood and the people had been exterminated together. When Theodore came to organize the Church of England, the very memory of the older Christian Church which existed in Roman Britain had passed away. The first Christian missionaries, strangers in a heathen land, attached themselves necessarily to the courts of the kings, who were their first converts, and whose conversion was generally followed by that of their people. The English bishops were thus at first royal chaplains, and their diocese was naturally nothing but the kingdom. Realms which are all but forgotten are thus commemorated in the limits of existing sees. That of Rochester represented till of late an obscure kingdom of West Kent, and the frontier of the original kingdom of Mercia may be recovered by following the map of the ancient bishopric of Lichfield. Theodore's first work was to add many new sees to the old ones; his second was to group all of them round the one centre of Canterbury. All ties between England and the Irish Church were roughly broken. Lindisfarne sank into obscurity with the flight of Colman and his monks. The new prelates, gathered in synod after synod, acknowledged the authority of their one primate. The organization of the episcopate was followed by the organization of the parish system. The loose system of the mission-station, the monastery from which priest and bishop went

Digitized by Google

SEC. III. THE NORTHUMBRIAN KINGDOM. 607-685.

forth on journey after journey to preach and baptize, as Aidan went forth from Lindisfarne, or Cuthbert from Melrose, naturally disappeared as the land became Christian. The missionaries became settled clergy. The holding of the English noble or landowner became the parish, and his chaplain the parish priest, as the king's chaplain had become the bishop, and the kingdom his diocese. A source of permanent endowment for the clergy was found at a later time in the revival of the Jewish system of tithes, and in the annual gift to Church purposes of a tenth of the produce of the soil; while discipline within the Church itself was provided for by an elaborate code of sin and penance, in which the principle of compensation, which lay at the root of Teutonic legislation, crept into the relations between God and the soul.

**Mercia, under Wulfere.**

In his work of organization, in his creation of parishes, in his arrangement of dioceses, and the way in which he grouped them round the see of Canterbury, in his national synods and ecclesiastical canons, Theodore was unconsciously doing a political work. The old divisions of kingdoms and tribes about him, divisions which had sprung for the most part from mere accidents of the conquest, were fast breaking down. The smaller states were by this time practically absorbed by the three larger ones, and of these three Mercia and Wessex were compelled to bow to the overlordship of Northumbria. The tendency to national unity which was to characterize the new England had thus already declared itself; but the policy of Theodore clothed with a sacred form and surrounded with divine sanctions a unity which as yet rested on no basis but the sword. The single throne of the one Primate at Canterbury accustomed men's minds to the thought of a single throne for their one temporal overlord at York, or, as in later days, at Lichfield or at Winchester. The regular subordination of priest to bishop, of bishop to primate, in the administration of the Church, supplied a mould on which the civil organization of the state quickly shaped itself. Above all, the councils gathered by Theodore were the first of all national gatherings for general legislation. It was at a much later time that the Wise Men of Wessex, or Northumbria, or Mercia, learned to come together in the Witenagemote of all England. It was the ecclesiastical synods which by their example led the way to our national parliaments, as it was the canons enacted in such synods which led the way to a national system of law. But if the movement towards national unity was furthered by the centralizing tendencies of the Church, it was furthered as powerfully by the overpowering strength of Northumbria. In arms the kingdom had but a single rival. Mercia, as we have seen, had partially recovered from the absolute subjection in which it was left after Penda's fall by shaking off the government of Oswi's thegns, and by choosing Wulfere for its king. Wulfere was a vigorous and active ruler, and the peaceful reign of Oswi left him free to build up again during seventeen years

Digitized by Google

of vigorous rule (659-675), the Mercian overlordship over the tribes of mid-England, which had been lost at Penda's death. For a while he had more than his father's success. Not only did Essex again own his supremacy, but even London fell into Mercian hands. The West-Saxons, who had been long ago stripped of their conquests along the Severn by Penda, were driven across the Thames by Wulfere, and all their settlements to the north of that river were annexed to the Mercian realm. One result of Wulfere's conquest remains to the present day; for the old bishop-stool of the West-Saxons had been established by Birinus at what was then the royal city of Dorchester; and it is to its retreat, with the kings of Wessex, to the town which became the new capital of their shrunken realm that we owe the bishopric of Winchester. The supremacy of Mercia soon reached even across the Thames, for Sussex, in its dread of the West-Saxons, found protection in accepting Wulfere's overlordship, and its king was rewarded by a gift of the two outlying settlements of the Jutes—the Isle of Wight and the lands of the Meonwaras along the Southampton water—which we must suppose had been reduced by Mercian arms.

Progress of Mercia.

The industrial progress of the Mercian kingdom went hand in hand with its military advance. The forests of its western border, the marshes of its eastern coast, were being cleared and drained by monastic colonies, whose success shows the hold which Christianity had now gained over its people. Heathenism, indeed, still held its own in the western woodlands, where the miners around Alcester drowned the voice of Bishop Ecgwine of Worcester, as he preached to them, with the din of their hammers. But in spite of their hammers Ecgwine's preaching left one lasting mark behind it. The bishop heard how a swineherd coming out from the forest depths on a sunny glade had seen the Three Fair Women of the old German mythology seated round a mystic bush and singing their unearthly song. In his fancy the Fair Women transformed themselves into a vision of the mother of Christ; and the silent glade soon became the site of an abbey dedicated to her, and of a town which sprang up under its shelter —the Evesham which was to be hallowed in after time by the fall of Earl Simon of Leicester. Wilder even than the western woodland was the desolate fen-country on the eastern border of the kingdom stretching from the "Holland," the sunk, hollow land of Lincolnshire, to the channel of the Ouse, a wilderness of shallow waters and reedy islets wrapped in its own dark mist-veil and tenanted only by flocks of screaming wild-fowl. Here through the liberality of King Wulfere rose the abbey of Peterborough. Here, too, Guthlac, a youth of the royal race of Mercia, sought a refuge from the world in the solitudes of Crowland, and so great was the reverence he won, that only two years had passed since his death when the stately Abbey of Crowland rose over his tomb. Earth was brought in boats to form a site; the buildings rested

Digitized by Google

SEC. III. THE NORTHUMBRIAN KINGDOM. 607-685.

on oaken piles driven into the marsh; a great stone church replaced the hermit's cell; and the toil of the new brotherhood changed the pools around them into fertile meadow-land. The abbey of Ely, as stately as that of Crowland, was founded in the same wild fen country by the Lady Æthelthryth, the wife of King Ecgfrith, who in the year 670 succeeded Oswi on the throne of Northumbria. Her flight from Ecgfrith's pursuit, and the shelter given her by Wulfere, may have aided to hurry on fresh contests between the two kingdoms. But the aid was hardly needed. His success was long and unvarying enough to fire Wulfere to a renewal of his father's effort to shake off the Northumbrian overlordship, an overlordship which Mercia had not ceased to acknowledge even though she had freed herself from the yoke of direct subjection. But the vigorous and warlike Ecgfrith was a different foe from the West-Saxon or the Jute, and the defeat of the king of Mercia was so complete that he was glad to purchase peace by giving up to his conquerors the province of the Lindiswaras or Lincolnshire.

**The Fall of Northumbria.**

Peace would have been purchased more hardly had not Ecgfrith's ambition turned rather to conquests over the Briton than to victories over his fellow Englishmen. The war between Briton and Englishman, which had languished since the battle of Chester, had been revived some twelve years before by an advance of the West-Saxons to the south-west. Unable to save the possessions of Wessex north of the Thames from the grasp of Wulfere, its king, Cenwalh, sought for compensation in an attack on his Welsh neighbours. A victory at Bradford on the Avon enabled him to overrun the country north of Mendip, which had till then been held by the Britons; and a second campaign in 658, which ended in a victory on the skirts of the great forest that covered Somerset to the east, settled the West-Saxons as conquerors round the sources of the Parret. It was probably the example of the West-Saxons which spurred Ecgfrith to a series of attacks upon his British neighbours in the west which raised Northumbria to its highest pitch of glory. Up to the very moment of his fall indeed the reign of Ecgfrith marks the highest pitch of Northumbrian power. His armies chased the Britons from the kingdom of Cumbria, and made the district of Carlisle English ground. A large part of the conquered country was bestowed upon the see of Lindisfarne, which was at this time filled by one whom we have seen before labouring as the Apostle of the Lowlands. After years of mission labour at Melrose, Cuthbert had quitted it for Holy Island, and preached among the moors of Northumberland as he had preached beside the banks of Tweed. He remained there through the great secession which followed on the Synod of Whitby, and became prior of the dwindled company of brethren, now torn with endless disputes, against which his patience and good humour struggled in vain. Worn out at last he fled to a little sandbank, one of a group of islets not far

Digitized by Google

from Ida's fortress of Bamborough, strewn for the most part with kelp and sea-weed, the home of the gull and the seal. In the midst of it rose his hut of rough stones and turf, dug down within deep into the rock, and roofed with logs and straw.

The reverence for his sanctity dragged Cuthbert back in old age to fill the vacant see of Lindisfarne. He entered Carlisle, which the King had bestowed upon the bishopric, at a moment when all Northumbria was waiting for news of a fresh campaign of Ecgfrith's against the Britons in the north. The Firth of Forth had long been the northern limit of Northumbria, and the Whithern, the "white stone town," in which a Northumbrian bishop, Trumwine, fixed the seat of his new bishopric of Galloway, was a sign of the subjection of the Britons of that district to the Northumbrian overlordship. Ecgfrith, however, resolved to carry his conquests further to the north, and crossing the Firth of Forth, his army marched in the year 685 into the land of the Picts. A sense of coming ill weighed on Northumbria, and its dread was quickened by a memory of the curses which had been pronounced by the bishops of Ireland on its king, when his navy, setting out a year before from the newly-conquered western coast, swept the Irish shores in a raid which seemed like sacrilege to those who loved the home of Aidan and Columba. As Cuthbert bent over a Roman fountain which still stood unharmed amongst the ruins of Carlisle, the anxious bystanders thought they caught words of ill-omen falling from the old man's lips. "Perhaps," he seemed to murmur, "at this very hour the peril of the fight is over and done." "Watch and pray," he said, when they questioned him on the morrow; "watch and pray." In a few days more a solitary fugitive escaped from the slaughter told that the Picts had turned desperately to bay, as the English army entered Fife; and that Ecgfrith and the flower of his nobles lay, a ghastly ring of corpses, on the far-off moorland of Nechtansmere (685).

**Death of Cuthbert**

To Cuthbert the tidings were tidings of death. His bishopric was soon laid aside, and two months after his return to his island-hermitage the old man lay dying, murmuring to the last words of concord and peace. A signal of his death had been agreed upon, and one of those who stood by ran with a candle in each hand to a place whence the light might be seen by a monk who was looking out from the watch-tower of Lindisfarne. As the tiny gleam flashed over the dark reach of sea, and the watchman hurried with his news into the church, the brethren of Holy Island were singing, as it chanced, the words of the Psalmist: "Thou hast cast us out and scattered us abroad; Thou hast also been displeased; Thou hast shown thy people heavy things; Thou hast given us a drink of deadly wine." The chant was the dirge, not of Cuthbert only, but of his church and his people. Over both hung from that hour the gloom of a seeming failure.



Digitized by Google

SEC. IV. THE OVERLORDSHIP OF MERCIA. 685-823.

Strangers who knew not Iona and Columba entered into the heritage of Aidan and Cuthbert. As the Roman Communion folded England again beneath her wing, men forgot that a Church which passed utterly away had battled with Rome for the spiritual headship of Western Christendom, and that English religion had for a hundred years its centre not at Canterbury, but at Lindisfarne. Nor were men long to remember that from the days of Æthelfrith to the days of Ecgfrith English politics had found their centre at York. But, forgotten or no, Northumbria had done its work. By its missionaries and by its sword it had won England from heathendom to the Christian Church. It had given her a new poetic literature. Its monasteries were already the seat of whatever intellectual life the country possessed. Above all it had been the first to gather together into a loose political unity the various tribes of the English people, and by standing at their head for nearly a century to accustom them to a national life, out of which England, as we have it now, was to spring.

### Section IV.—The Overlordship of Mercia, 685–823.

[*Authorities.*—A few incidents of Mercian history are preserved among the meagre annals of Wessex, which form, during this period, "The English Chronicle." But for the most part we are thrown upon later writers, especially Henry of Huntingdon and William of Malmesbury, both authors of the twelfth century, but having access to older materials now lost. The letters of Boniface, which form the most valuable contemporary materials for this period, are given by Dr. Giles (Bonifacii Opera Omnia. London: 1844). Those of Alcwine have been carefully edited by Jaffe in his series of Monumenta Germanica.]

**Ini of Wessex.**

THE supremacy of Northumbria fell for ever, with the death of Ecgfrith and the defeat of Nechtansmere. To the north the flight of Bishop Trumwine from Whithern announced the revolt of Galloway from her rule. In the south, Mercia at once took up again the projects of independence which had been crushed by Wulfere's defeat. His successor, the Mercian king Æthelred, again seized the province of the Lindiswaras, and the war he thus began with Northumbria was only ended by a peace negotiated through Archbishop Theodore, which left him master of Middle England, and free to attempt the direct conquest of the south. For the moment indeed the attempt proved a fruitless one, for at the instant of Northumbria's fall Wessex rose into fresh power under Ini, the greatest of its early kings. Under his predecessor, Centwine, it had again taken up its war with the Britons, and conquered as far as the Quantocks. Ini, whose reign covered the long period from 688 to 726, carried on during the whole of it the war which Centwine had begun. He pushed his way southward round the marshes of the Parret to a more fertile territory, and guarded the frontier of his new conquests by a wooden fort on the banks of the Tone, which has

Digitized by Google

grown into the present Taunton. The West-Saxons thus became masters of the whole district which now bears the name of Somerset, the shire of the Sumer-soetas, where the Tor rose like an island out of a waste of flood-drowned fen that stretched westward to the Channel. At the base of this hill Ini established on the site of an older British foundation his famous monastery of Glastonbury. The monastery probably took this English name from an English family, the Glæstings, who chose the spot for their settlement; but it had long been a place of pilgrimage, and the tradition of its having been the resting-place of a second Patrick drew thither the wandering scholars of Ireland. The first inhabitants of Ini's abbey found, as they alleged, "an ancient church built by no art of man;" and to this relic of a Roman time they added their own oratory of stone. The spiritual charge of his conquests Ini committed to Ealdhelm, the most famous scholar of his day, who became the first bishop of the see of Sherborne, which the king formed out of a part of the older diocese of Winchester so as to include the new parts of his kingdom. Ini's code, the earliest collection of West-Saxon laws which remains to us, shows a wise solicitude to provide for the civil as well as the ecclesiastical organization of his kingdom. His repulse of the Mercians, when they at last attacked Wessex, showed how well he could provide for its defence. Ceolred, the successor of Æthelred on the throne of Mercia, began the struggle with Wessex for the overlordship of the south; but he was repulsed in 714 in a bloody encounter at Wodnesburh on the borders of the two kingdoms. Able however as Ini was to hold Mercia at bay, he was unable to hush the civil strife that was the curse of Wessex, and a wild legend tells the story of the disgust which drove him from the world. He had feasted royally at one of his country houses, and on the morrow, as he rode from it, his queen bade him turn back thither. The king returned to find his house stripped of curtains and vessels, and foul with refuse and the dung of cattle, while in the royal bed where he had slept with Æthelburh rested a sow with her farrow of pigs. The scene had no need of the queen's comment: "See, my lord, how the fashion of this world passeth away!" In 726 Ini laid down his crown, and sought peace and death in a pilgrimage to Rome.

**Æthelbald of Mercia.**

The anarchy which had driven Ini from the throne broke out on his departure in civil strife which left Wessex an easy prey to the successor of Ceolred. Among those who sought Guthlac's retirement at Crowland came Æthelbald, a Mercian of royal blood flying from Ceolred's hate. Driven off again and again by the king's pursuit, Æthelbald still returned to the little hut he had built beside the hermitage, comforting himself in hours of despair with his companion's words. "Know how to wait," said Guthlac, "and the kingdom will come to thee; not by violence or rapine, but by the hand of God." In 716 Ceolred fell frenzy-smitten at his board, and Mercia chose Æthelbald



Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.

THE OVER-LORDSHIP OF MERCIA.

685-823.

for its king. Already the realm reached from Humber to Thames; and Æthelred, crossing the latter river, had reduced Kent beneath his over lordship. But with Æthelbald began Mercia's fiercest struggle for the complete supremacy of the south. He penetrated into the very heart of the West-Saxon kingdom, and his siege and capture of the royal town of Somerton in 733 ended the war. For twenty years the overlordship of Mercia was recognized by all Britain south of the Humber. Æthelbald styled himself "King not of the Mercians only, but of all the neighbouring peoples who are called by the common name of Southern English." The use of a title unknown till his day, that of "King of Britain," betrayed the daring hope that the creation of an English realm, so long attempted in vain by the kings of Northumbria, might be reserved for the new power of Mercia. But the aim of Æthelbald was destined to the same failure as that of his predecessors. England north of Humber was saved from his grasp by the heroic defence made by the Northumbrian king Eadberht, who renewed for a while the fading glories of his kingdom by an alliance with the Picts, which enabled him in 765 to conquer Strathclyde, and take its capital, Alcluyd, or Dumbarton. Southern England was wrested from Mercia by a revolt into which the West-Saxons were driven through the intolerable exactions of their new overlord. At the head of his own Mercian army, and of the subject hosts of Kent, Essex, and East-Anglia, Æthelbald marched in 752 to the field of Burford, where the West-Saxons were again marshalled under the golden dragon of their race; but after hours of desperate fighting in the very forefront of the battle, a sudden panic seized the Mercian king, and he fled first of his army from the field. A second Mercian defeat at Secandun in 755 confirmed the freedom of Wessex, but amidst the rout of his host Æthelbald redeemed the one hour of shame that had tarnished his glory. He refused to fly, and fell on the field.

**Bæda.**

While Mercia was thus battling for the overlordship of the south, Northumbria had set aside its glory in arms for the pursuits of peace. Under the peaceful reigns of Ecgfrith's successors, Eadfrith the Learned and Coelwulf, their kingdom became in the middle of the eighth century the literary centre of the Christian world in Western Europe. No schools were more famous than those of Jarrow and York. The whole learning of the age seemed to be summed up in a Northumbrian scholar. Bæda—the Venerable Bede as later times styled him—was born about ten years after the Synod of Whitby, beneath the shade of a great abbey which Benedict Biscop was rearing by the mouth of the Wear. His youth was trained and his long tranquil life was wholly spent in an offshoot of Benedict's house which was founded by his scholar Ceolfrid. Bæda never stirred from Jarrow. "I spent my whole life in the same monastery," he says, "and while attentive to the rule of my order and the service

Digitized by Google

of the Church, my constant pleasure lay in learning, or teaching, or writing." The words sketch for us a scholar's life, the more touching in its simplicity that it is the life of the first great English scholar. The quiet grandeur of a life consecrated to knowledge, the tranquil pleasure that lies in learning and teaching and writing, dawned for Englishmen in the story of Bæda. While still young, he became teacher, and six hundred monks, besides strangers that flocked thither for instruction, formed his school of Jarrow. It is hard to imagine how among the toils of the schoolmaster and the duties of the monk Bæda could have found time for the composition of the numerous works that made his name famous in the West. But materials for study had accumulated in Northumbria through the journeys of Wilfrith and Benedict Biscop, and Archbishop Ecgberht was forming the first English library at York. The tradition of the older Irish teachers still lingered to direct the young scholar into that path of Scriptural interpretation to which he chiefly owed his fame. Greek, a rare accomplishment in the West, came to him from the school which the Greek Archbishop Theodore founded beneath the walls of Canterbury. His skill in the ecclesiastical chaunt was derived from a Roman cantor whom Pope Vitalian sent in the train of Benedict Biscop. Little by little the young scholar thus made himself master of the whole range of the science of his time; he became, as Burke rightly styled him, "the father of English learning." The tradition of the older classic culture was first revived for England in his quotations of Plato and Aristotle, of Seneca and Cicero, of Lucretius and Ovid. Virgil cast over him the same spell that he cast over Dante; verses from the Æneid break his narratives of martyrdoms, and the disciple ventures on the track of the great master in a little eclogue descriptive of the approach of spring. His work was done with small aid from others. "I am my own secretary," he writes; "I make my own notes. I am my own librarian." But forty-five works remained after his death to attest his prodigious industry. In his own eyes and those of his contemporaries the most important among these were the commentaries and homilies upon various books of the Bible which he had drawn from the writings of the Fathers. But he was far from confining himself to theology. In treatises compiled as text-books for his scholars, Bæda threw together all that the world had then accumulated in astronomy and meteorology, in physics and music, in philosophy, grammar, rhetoric, arithmetic, medicine. But the encyclopædic character of his researches left him in heart a simple Englishman. He loved his own English tongue, he was skilled in English song, his last work was a translation into English of the Gospel of St. John, and almost the last words that broke from his lips were some English rhymes upon death.

**Death of Bæda.**

But the noblest proof of his love of England lies in the work which immortalizes his name. In his "Ecclesiastical History of the English

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.

THE OVERLORDSHIP OF MERCIA. 685-823.

Nation," Bæda was at once the founder of mediæval history and the first English historian. All that we really know of the century and a half that follows the landing of Augustine, we know from him. Wherever his own personal observation extended, the story is told with admirable detail and force. He is hardly less full or accurate in the portions which he owed to his Kentish friends, Alcwine and Nothelm. What he owed to no informant was his own exquisite faculty of story-telling, and yet no story of his own telling is so touching as the story of his death. Two weeks before the Easter of 755 the old man was seized with an extreme weakness and loss of breath. He still preserved, however, his usual pleasantness and gay good-humour, and in spite of prolonged sleeplessness continued his lectures to the pupils about him. Verses of his own English tongue broke from time to time from the master's lip—rude rimes that told how before the "need-fare," Death's stern "must-go," none can enough bethink him what is to be his doom for good or ill. The tears of Bæda's scholars mingled with his song. "We never read without weeping," writes one of them. So the days rolled on to Ascension-tide, and still master and pupils toiled at their work, for Bæda longed to bring to an end his version of St. John's Gospel into the English tongue, and his extracts from Bishop Isidore. "I don't want my boys to read a lie," he answered those who would have had him rest, "or to work to no purpose, after I am gone." A few days before Ascension-tide his sickness grew upon him, but he spent the whole day in teaching, only saying cheerfully to his scholars, "Learn with what speed you may; I know not how long I may last." The dawn broke on another sleepless night, and again the old man called his scholars round him and bade them write. "There is still a chapter wanting," said the scribe, as the morning drew on, "and it is hard for thee to question thyself any longer." "It is easily done," said Bæda; "take thy pen and write quickly." Amid tears and farewells the day wore on to eventide. "There is yet one sentence unwritten, dear master," said the boy. "Write it quickly," bade the dying man. "It is finished now," said the little scribe at last. "You speak truth," said the master; "all is finished now." Placed upon the pavement, his head supported in his scholar's arms, his face turned to the spot where he was wont to pray, Bæda chaunted the solemn "Glory to God." As his voice reached the close of his song, he passed quietly away.

**Anarchy of Northumbria.**

First among English scholars, first among English theologians, first among English historians, it is in the monk of Jarrow that English literature strikes its roots. In the six hundred scholars who gathered round him for instruction he is the father of our national education. In his physical treatises he is the first figure to which our science looks back. Bæda was a statesman as well as a scholar, and the letter which in the last year of his life he addressed to Archbishop Ecgberht

Digitized by Google

of York shows how vigorously he proposed to battle against the growing anarchy of Northumbria. But his plans of reform came too late; and though a king like Eadberht might beat back the inroads of the Mercians and even conquer Strathclyde, before the anarchy of his own kingdom even Eadberht could only fling down his sceptre and seek a refuge in the cloisters of Lindisfarne. From the death of Bæda the history of Northumbria is in fact only a wild story of lawlessness and bloodshed. King after king was swept away by treason and revolt, the country fell into the hands of its turbulent nobles, the very fields lay waste, and the land was swept by famine and plague. An anarchy almost as complete had fallen on Wessex after its repulse of Æthelbald's invasion. Only in Mercia was there any sign of order and settled rule.

**Offa of Mercia.**

The two crushing defeats at Burford and Secandun were far from having broken the Mercian power. Under Offa, whose reign from 758 to 796 covers with that of Æthelbald nearly the whole of the eighth century, it rose to a height unknown before. The energy of the new king was shown in his struggle with the Welsh on his western border. Since the dissolution of the temporary alliance which Penda formed with the Welsh King Cadwallon, the war with the Britons in the west had been the one fatal hindrance to the progress of Mercia. Æthelbald had led in vain the united forces of his under-kings, and even of Wessex, against Wales. But it was under Offa that Mercia first really braced herself to the completion of her British conquests. Beating back the Welsh from Hereford, and carrying his own ravages into the heart of Wales, Offa drove the King of Powys from his capital, which changed its old name of Pengwern for the significant English title of the Town in the Scrub or Bush, Scrobbesbyryg, Shrewsbury. Experience, however, had taught the Mercians the worthlessness of raids like these. Offa resolved to create a military border by planting a settlement of Englishmen between the Severn, which had till then served as the western boundary of the English race, and the huge "Offa's Dyke," which he drew from the mouth of Wye to that of Dee. Here, as in the later conquests of the West-Saxons, we find the old plan of extermination definitely abandoned. The Welsh who chose to remain dwelt undisturbed among their English conquerors, and it was to regulate the mutual relations of the two races that Offa drew up a code of Mercian laws which bore his name. From these conquests over the Britons, Offa turned to make a fresh attempt to gain that overlordship over Britain which his predecessors had failed to win. His policy was marked by a singular combination of activity and self-restraint. He refrained carefully from any effort to realize his aim by force of arms. An expedition against the town of Hastings, indeed, with a victory at Otford on the Derwent, reasserted the supremacy of Mercia over Kent,

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.

THE OVERLORDSHIP OF MERCIA.
685-823.

when it was shaken for a time by a revolt of the Kentishmen; and East-Anglia seems to have been directly annexed to the Mercian kingdom. But his relations with Northumbria and with Wessex were for the most part peaceful, and his aim was rather at the exercise of a commanding influence over them than at the assertion of any overlordship in name. He avenged Æthelbald's defeats by a victory over the West-Saxons at Bensington, but he attempted no subjugation of their country. He contented himself with placing a creature of his own on its throne, and with wedding him to his daughter Eadburh. The marriage of a second daughter with the King of Northumbria established a similar influence in the north. Both the Northumbrian and the West-Saxon king were threatened by rival claimants of their thrones, and both looked for aid against them to the arms of Offa. Without jarring against their jealous assertion of independence, Offa had in fact brought both Wessex and Northumbria into dependence on Mercia.

**England and the Franks.**

Such a supremacy must soon have passed into actual sovereignty, but for the intervention at this moment of a power from across the sea, the power of the Franks. The connection of the Franks with the English kingdoms at this time was brought about by a missionary from Wessex. Boniface (or Winfrith) followed in the track of earlier preachers, both Irish and English, who had been labouring to little purpose among the heathens of Germany, and especially among those who had now become subjects to the Franks. It was through the disciples whom he planted along the line of his labours that the Frankish sovereigns were drawn to an interest in English affairs. Whether from mere jealousy of a neighbour state, or from designs of an invasion and conquest of England which the growth of any great central power in the island would check, the support of the weaker kingdoms against Mercia became the policy of the Frankish Court. When Eadberht of Northumbria was attacked by Æthelbald of Mercia, the Frank King Pippin sent him presents and the offer of an alliance. When Pippin's son, Charles the Great, succeeded him, he received with favour an appeal for protection sent by King Ealhred of Northumbria through Lullus, who had followed Boniface as Archbishop of Maintz. The Court of Charles became a place of refuge for the enemies of Offa; for Eardwulf, a claimant of the Northumbrian crown, who was driven from Northumbria by the husband of one of Offa's daughters, and for Ecgberht, a claimant of the West-Saxon crown, who was driven from Wessex by the husband of another. A revolt of Kent against Mercia at last brought Charles and Offa into open collision. Kent appealed to Charles for protection, but the threats of Charles were met by Offa with defiance. The Mercian army reconquered Kent; and a plot of Jaenberht, the Archbishop of Canterbury, for bringing about a landing of Frankish troops, was discovered and defeated. Offa drove the archbishop into exile, and punished

Digitized by Google

his see by setting up Lichfield as a rival archbishopic. The failure of a marriage negotiation widened the breach between the two sovereigns: each closed the ports on his own side of the channel against the subjects of the other; and war was only averted by the efforts of a Northumbrian scholar, Alcwine, whose learning had secured him the confidence and friendship of Charles the Great.

**Fall of Mercia.**

The good sense of the Frankish sovereign probably told him that the time was not come for any projects against Britain. Secure on either border, his kingdom wealthy with years of peace and order, and his armies fresh from victories over Welshman and Kentishman, Offa was no unworthy antagonist for Charles the Great. Charles therefore not only declined a struggle, but negotiated with his rival a treaty, memorable as the first monument of our foreign diplomacy, which secured protection for the English merchants and pilgrims who were making their way in growing numbers to Rome. But the death of Offa in 796 at once reopened the strife. The hand of Charles was seen in a new revolt of Kent, and in the support which he gave to the appeal of the Archbishop of Canterbury against the archbishopric which Offa had set up at Lichfield. Cenwulf, Offa's successor, showed a vigour and moderation worthy of Offa himself. He roughly put down the Kentish revolt, and then conciliated the Kentish archbishop by the suppression of the rival see. But the next move of Charles proved a more fatal one. On the death of Beornred, the sovereign whom Offa had set up over Wessex, Ecgberht was at once despatched from the Frankish Court, and welcomed by the West-Saxons as their king. Some years after, the influence of Charles brought about the restoration of Eardwulf, who, like Ecgberht, had taken refuge at his court, to the throne of Northumbria. In the north as in the south, the work of Offa was thus undone. Within, Mercia was torn by a civil war which broke out on Cenwulf's death; and the weakness which this produced was seen when the old strife with Wessex was renewed by his successor. In 823 Beornwulf penetrated into Wiltshire, and was defeated in a bloody battle at Ellandun. All England south of the Thames at once submitted to Ecgberht of Wessex, and East-Anglia rose in a desperate revolt which proved fatal to its Mercian rulers. Beornwulf and his successor Ludeca fell in two great defeats at the hands of the East-Anglians; and Wiglaf had hardly mounted the Mercian throne when his exhausted kingdom was called on again to encounter the West-Saxon. While Mercia was struggling against the revolt of East-Anglia, Ecgberht had carried on the old war of Wessex with the Briton, had conquered and colonized Devon, and fixed the new English border at the Tamar. The weakness of Mercia after its two defeats called him to a greater conquest. In 827 his army marched northward without a struggle. Wiglaf fled helplessly before it; and Mercia bowed to the West-Saxon overlordship. From Mercia

Digitized by Google

SEC. V. WESSEX AND THE DANES. 800-880.

Ecgberht marched on Northumbria, but a century of bloodshed and anarchy had robbed that kingdom of all vigour, and its nobles met him at the Don with an acknowledgment of his overlordship. He turned to the West; and the Welsh, who were still smarting from the heavy blows inflicted on them by Mercia, submitted to the joint army of Mercians and West-Saxons which he led into the field. The dream of Eadwine and of Offa seemed at last made real: and in right of an overlordship which stretched from the Forth to the British Channel Ecgberht styled himself "the King of the English."

### Section V.—Wessex and the Danes, 800—880.

[*Authorities.*—Our history here rests mainly on the English (or Anglo-Saxon) Chronicle. The earlier part of this is a compilation, and consists of (1) Annals of the conquest of South Britain, (2) Short notices of the kings and bishops of Wessex, expanded into larger form by copious insertions from Bæda, and after his death by briefer additions from some northern sources. (3) It is probable that these materials were thrown together, and perhaps translated from Latin into English, in Ælfred's time, as a preface to the far fuller annals which begin with the reign of Æthelwulf, and widen into a great contemporary history when they reach that of Ælfred himself. Of their character and import as a part of English literature, I have spoken in the text. The "Life of Ælfred," which bears the name of Asser, though valuable, as at least founded on contemporary authority, must, in its present shape, be regarded as of a later date. There is an admirable modern life of the king by Dr. Pauli.]

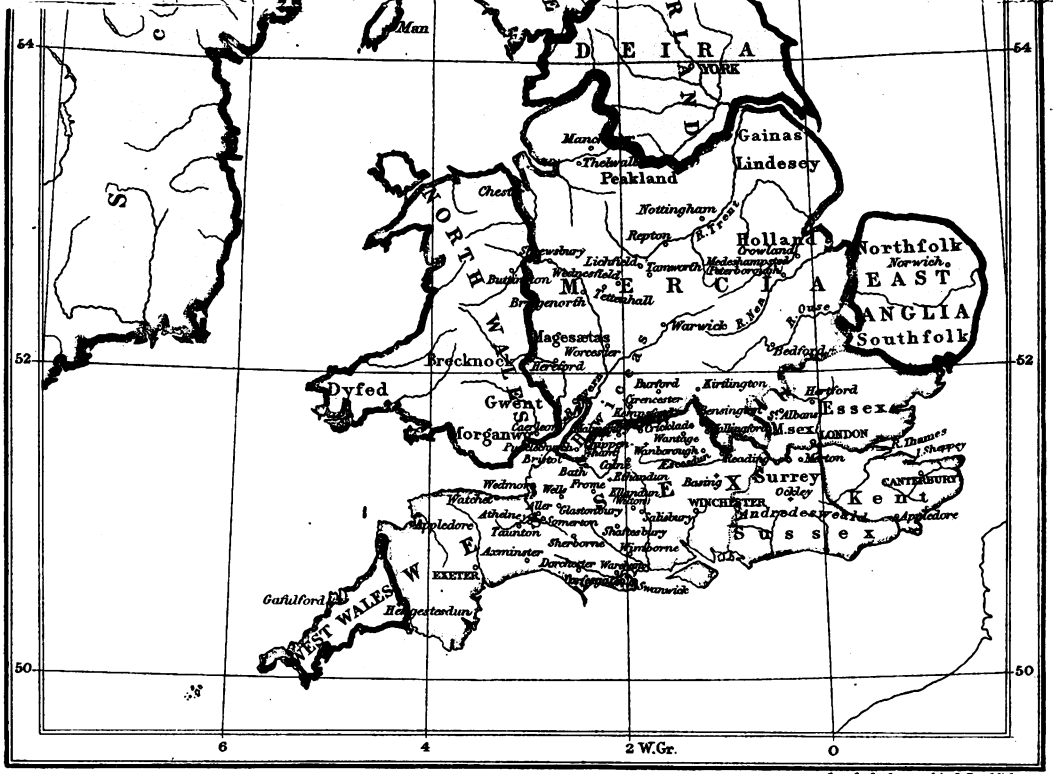
**The Danes.**

As the Frank had undermined the greatness of Mercia, so the Dane struck down the short-lived greatness of Wessex. Norway and its fellow Scandinavian kingdoms, Sweden and Denmark, were being brought at this time into more settled order by a series of great sovereigns, and the bolder spirits who would not submit to their rule were driven to the sea, and embraced a life of piracy and war. Ecgberht had hardly brought all Britain under his sway when these Danes, as all the Northmen were at this time called, were seen hovering off the English coast, and growing in numbers and hardihood as they crept southward to the Thames. The first sight of the Danes is as if the hand on the dial of history had gone back three hundred years. The same Norwegian fiords, the same Frisian sandbanks, pour forth their pirate fleets as in the days of Hengest and Cerdic. There is the same wild panic as the black boats of the invaders strike inland along the river reaches, or moor round the river islets, the same sights of horror—firing of homesteads, slaughter of men, women driven off to slavery or shame, children tossed on pikes or sold in the market-place—as when the English invaders attacked Britain. Christian priests were again slain at the altar by worshippers of Woden, for the Danes were still heathen. Letters, arts, religion, governments disappeared before these Northmen as before the Northmen of old. But when the wild burst of the storm was over, land, people, government reappeared unchanged. England

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google




Stanford's Geographical Establishment

London: Macmillan & Co.

Digitized by Google

BRITISH MUSEUM
1 FE 75

Digitized by Google

still remained England; the Danes sank quickly into the mass of those around them; and Woden yielded without a struggle to Christ. The secret of this difference between the two invasions was that the battle was no longer between men of different races. It was no onger a fight between Briton and German, between Englishman and Welshman. The Danes were the same people in blood and speech with the people they attacked; they were in fact Englishmen bringing back to an England that had forgotten its origins the barbaric England of its pirate forefathers. Nowhere over Europe was the fight so fierce, because nowhere else were the combatants men of one blood and one speech. But just for this reason the fusion of the Northmen with their foes was nowhere so peaceful and so complete.

**The Danish Conquests.**

Under Ecgberht and his son Æthelwulf the attacks of the Danes were directed to the two extremities of the West-Saxon realm. They swept up the Thames to the plunder of London and Canterbury, and rearoused the Welsh war on the frontier of Devon. It was in the alliance of the Danes with the Britons that the danger of these earlier inroads lay. Ecgberht defeated the united forces of these two enemies in a victory at Hengestesdun; and his son Æthelwulf, who succeeded him in 836, drove back the Welsh of North Wales who were encouraged to rise in revolt by the same Danish co-operation. Danes and Welshmen were beaten again and again, and yet the danger grew greater year by year. King Æthelwulf fought strenuously in the defence of his realm; in the defeat of Charmouth, as in the victory at Aclea, he led his troops in person against the sea-robbers. The dangers to the Christian faith from these heathen assailants roused the clergy to his aid. Swithhun, Bishop of Winchester, became Æthelwulf's minister; Ealhstan, Bishop of Sherborne, became the most formidable among the soldiers of the Cross. The first complete victory over the Danes in an encounter at the mouth of the Parret was of Ealhstan's winning. At last hard fighting gained the realm a little respite; for eight years the Danes left the land, and in 858 Æthelwulf died in peace. But these earlier Danish forays had been mere preludes to the real burst of the Danish storm. When it burst in its full force upon the island, it was no longer a series of plunder-raids, but the invasion of Britain by a host of conquerors who settled as they conquered. In 866 the Danes landed in East-Anglia, and marched in the next spring across the Humber upon York. Civil strife, as usual, distracted the energies of Northumbria. Its subject-crown was disputed by two claimants, and when they united to meet this common danger both fell in the same defeat before the walls of their capital. Northumbria at once submitted to the Danes, and Mercia was only saved by a hasty march of King Æthelred, the successor of Æthelwulf, to its aid. Æthelred was the third of Æthelwulf's sons, who had mounted the throne after the short reigns of his brothers, Æthelbald and Æthelberht. But the Peace of Nottingham, by which Æthelred

Digitized by Google

SEC. V.

WESSEX AND THE DANES. 800-880.

saved Mercia in 868, gave the Danes leisure to prepare for an invasion of East-Anglia, whose under-king, Eadmund, brought prisoner before the Danish leaders, was bound to a tree and shot to death with arrows. His martyrdom by the heathen made him the St. Sebastian of English legend; in later days his figure gleamed from the pictured windows of every church along the eastern coast, and the stately Abbey of St. Edmundsbury rose over his relics. With Eadmund ended the line of East-Anglian under-kings, for his kingdom was not only conquered but divided among the soldiers of the Danish host, and their leader Guthrum assumed its crown. Then the Northmen turned to the richer spoil of the great abbeys of the Fen. Peterborough, Crowland, Ely, went up in flames, and their monks fled or were slain among the ruins. Mercia, though it was as yet still spared from actual conquest, crouched in terror before the Danes, acknowledged them in 870 as its overlords, and paid them tribute.

**Danes and Wessex.**

In five years the work of Ecgberht had been undone, and England north of the Thames had been torn from the overlordship of Wessex. So rapid a conquest as the Danish conquest of Northumbria, Mercia, and East-Anglia, had only been made possible by the temper of these kingdoms themselves. To them the conquest was simply their transfer from one overlord to another, and it would seem as if they preferred the overlordship of the Dane to the overlordship of the West-Saxon. It was another sign of the enormous difficulty of welding these kingdoms together into a single people. The time had now come for Wessex to fight, not for supremacy, but for life. As yet it seemed paralysed by terror. With the exception of his one march on Nottingham, King Æthelred had done nothing to save his under-kingdoms from the wreck. But the Danes no sooner pushed up Thames to Reading, than the West-Saxons, attacked on their own soil, turned fiercely at bay. The tongue of land between the Kennet and Thames was contested in four doubtful battles, but Æthelred died in the midst of the struggle, and in 871 the withdrawal of the Danes left his youngest brother Ælfred king, with a few years' breathing-space for his realm. It was easy for the quick eye of Ælfred to see that the Danes had withdrawn simply with the view of gaining firmer footing for a new attack; indeed, three years had hardly passed before Mercia was invaded, and its under-king driven over sea to make place for a tributary of the Danes. From Repton half their host marched northwards to the Tyne, dividing a land where there was little left to plunder, colonizing and tilling it, while Guthrum led the rest into his kingdom of East-Anglia to prepare for their next year's attack on Wessex. In 876 the Danish fleet appeared before Wareham, and when driven thence by Ælfred, threw themselves into Exeter and allied themselves with the Welsh. Through the winter Ælfred girded himself for this new peril. At break of spring his army closed

Digitized by Google

round the town, while a hired fleet cruised off the coast to guard against rescue. The peril of their brethren in Exeter forced a part of the Danish host which had remained at Wareham to put to sea with the view of aiding them, but they were caught in a mist by the English squadron and driven on the rocks of Swanage.

Sec. V
Wessex and the Danes.
800-880.

Exeter was at last starved into surrender, and the Danes again swore to leave Wessex. They withdrew to Gloucester, but Ælfred had hardly disbanded his troops when his enemies, roused by the arrival of fresh hordes eager for plunder, reappeared at Chippenham, and in the mid-winter of 878 marched ravaging over the land. The surprise was complete, and for a month or two the general panic left no hope of resistance. Ælfred, with his small band of followers, could only throw himself into a fort raised hastily in the isle of Athelney, among the marshes of the Parret. It was a position from which he could watch closely the movements of his foes, and with the first burst of spring he called the thegns of Somerset to his standard, and still gathering his troops as he moved, marched through Wiltshire on the Danes. He found their host at Edington, defeated it in a great battle, and after a siege of fourteen days forced their camp to surrender. Their leader, Guthrum of East-Anglia, was baptised as a Christian and bound by a solemn peace or "frith," at Wedmore in Somerset. For ten years all danger from the Northmen was at an end.

**Peace of Wedmore.**

With the Peace of Wedmore in 878 began a work even more noble than this deliverance of Wessex from the Dane. "So long as I have lived," wrote Ælfred in later days, "I have striven to live worthily." He longed, when death overtook him, "to leave to the men that come after a remembrance of him in good works." The aim has been more than fulfilled. The memory of the life and doings of the noblest of English rulers has come down to us living and distinct through the mist of exaggeration and legend that gathered round it. Politically or intellectually, indeed, the sphere of Ælfred's action is too small to justify a comparison of him with the few whom the world claims as its greatest men. What really lifts him to their level is the moral grandeur of his life. He lived solely for the good of his people. He is the first instance in the history of Christendom of the Christian king, of a ruler who put aside every personal aim or ambition to devote himself to the welfare of those whom he ruled. So long as he lived he strove "to live worthily;" but in his mouth a life of worthiness meant a life of justice, temperance, self-sacrifice. The Peace of Wedmore at once marked the temper of the man. Ardent warrior as he was, with a disorganized England before him, he set aside at thirty-one the dream of conquest to leave behind him the memory, not of victories but of "good works," of daily toils by which he secured peace, good government, education for his people. His policy was one of peace. He set aside all dreams of the reco-

**Ælfred,** 871—901.

Digitized by Google

SEC. V. WESSEX AND THE DANES. 800-880.

very of the West-Saxon overlordship. With England across the Watling Street, a Roman road which ran from Chester to London, in other words with Northumbria, East-Anglia, and the bulk of Mercia, Ælfred had nothing to do. All that he retained was his own Wessex, with London and the country round it, and with the districts north of the Thames which the Mercian king Wulfere had long ago torn away from Wessex, but which the Peace of Wedmore restored to Wessex again. Over these latter districts, to which the name of Mercia was now confined, while the rest of the Mercian kingdom became known as the Five Boroughs of the Danes, Ælfred set the Ealdorman Æthelred, the husband of his daughter Æthelflæd, a ruler well fitted by his courage and activity to guard Wessex against inroads from the north. Against invasion from the sea he provided by a closer union of the dependent kingdoms of Kent and Sussex with Wessex itself, by the better organization of military service, and by the creation of a fleet.

**Ælfred's Rule.**

The defence of his realm thus provided for, he devoted himself to its good government. His work was of a simple and practical order. He was wanting in the imaginative qualities which mark the higher statesman, nor can we trace in his acts any sign of a creative faculty or any perception of new ideas. In politics as in war, or in his after dealings with letters, he simply took what was closest at hand and made the best of it. The laws of Ini and Offa were codified and amended, justice was more rigidly administered, corporal punishment was substituted in most cases for the old blood-wite or money-fine, and the right of private revenge was curtailed. The strong moral bent of Ælfred's mind was seen in some of the novelties of his legislation. The Ten Commandments and a portion of the Law of Moses were prefixed to his code, and thus became part of the law of the land. Labour on Sundays and holydays was made criminal, and heavy punishments were exacted for sacrilege, perjury, and the seduction of nuns. Much of the success of his actual administration was due, no doubt, to his choice of instruments. He had a keen eye for men. Denewulf, the Bishop of Winchester, was said to have been a swineherd in the forest when Ælfred, struck with the quickness of his wit, took him home and reared him at his court. The story is a mere legend, but it conveys a popular impression of the king's rapid recognition of merit in any station. He could hardly have chosen braver or more energetic coadjutors than those whom he employed both in his political and in his educational efforts. The two children whom he himself trained for rule, Eadward and Æthelflæd, proved the ablest rulers of their time. But the secret of his good government lay mainly in the intense energy of Ælfred himself.

**Ælfred's Character**

The spirit of adventure that made him in youth the first huntsman

Digitized by Google

of his day, the reckless daring of his early manhood, took later and graver form in an activity that found time amidst the cares of state for the daily duties of religion, for converse with strangers, for study and translation, for learning poems by heart, for planning buildings and instructing craftsmen in gold-work, for teaching even falconers and dog-keepers their business. Restless as he was, his activity was the activity of a mind strictly practical. Ælfred was pre-eminently a man of business, careful of detail, laborious, and methodical. He carried in his bosom a little hand-book, in which he jotted down things as they struck him; now a bit of family genealogy, now a prayer, now a story, such as that of Bishop Ealdhelm singing sacred songs on the bridge. Each hour of the king's day had its peculiar task; there was the same order in the division of his revenue and in the arrangement of his court. But active and busy as he was, his temper remained simple and kindly. We have few stories of his life that are more than mere legends, but even legend itself never ventured to depart from the outlines of a character which men knew so well. During his months of waiting at Athelney, while the country was overrun by the Danes, he was said to have entered a peasant's hut, and to have been bidden by the housewife, who did not recognize him, to turn the cakes which were baking on the hearth. The young king did as he was bidden, but in the sad thoughts which came over him he forgot his task, and bore in amused silence the scolding of the good wife, who found her cakes spoilt on her return. This tale, if nothing more than a tale, could never have been told of a man without humour. Tradition told of his genial good-nature, of his chattiness over the adventures of his life, and above all of his love for song. In his busiest days Ælfred found time to learn the old songs of his race by heart, and bade them be taught in the Palace-school. As he translated the tales of the heathen mythology he lingered fondly over and expanded them, and in moments of gloom he found comfort in the music of the Psalms.

**Ælfred and Literature.**

Neither the wars nor the legislation of Ælfred were destined to leave such lasting traces upon England as the impulse he gave to its literature. His end indeed even in this was practical rather than literary. What he aimed at was simply the education of his people. As yet Wessex was the most ignorant among the English kingdoms. "When I began to reign," said Ælfred, "I cannot remember one south of Thames who could explain his service-book in English." Even in the more highly cultivated towns of Mercia and Northumbria the Danish sword had left few survivors of the school of Ecgberht or Bæda. To remedy this ignorance Ælfred desired that at least every free-born youth who possessed the means should "abide at his book till he can well understand English writing." He himself superintended a school which he had established for the young nobles of his court. At home he found none to help him in his educational efforts but a few

Digitized by Google

SEC. V.
WESSEX AND THE DANES.
800-880.

Mercian prelates and priests, with one Welsh bishop, Asser. "Formerly," the king writes bitterly, "men came hither from foreign lands to seek for instruction, and now when we desire it we can only obtain it from abroad." But his mind was far from being prisoned within his own island. He sent a Norwegian ship-master to explore the White Sea, and Wulfstan to trace the coast of Esthonia; envoys bore his presents to the churches of India and Jerusalem, and an annual mission carried Peter's-pence to Rome. It was with France, however, that his intercourse was closest, and it was from thence that he drew the scholars to aid him in his work of education. A scholar named Grimbald came from St. Omer to preside over the new abbey at Winchester; and John, the Old Saxon, was fetched from the abbey of Corbey to rule a monastery and school that Ælfred's gratitude for his deliverance from the Danes raised in the marshes of Athelney.

**Ælfred's Translations.**

The real work, however, to be done was done not by these scholars, but by the king himself. Ælfred resolved to throw open to his people in their own tongue the knowledge which had till then been limited to the clergy. He took his books as he found them—they were the popular manuals of his age—the Consolations of Boethius, the Pastorals of Pope Gregory, the compilation of Orosius, then the one accessible handbook of universal history, and the history of his own people by Bæda. He translated these works into English, but he was far more than a translator, he was an editor for the people. Here he omitted, there he expanded. He enriched Orosius by a sketch of the new geographical discoveries in the North. He gave a West-Saxon form to his selections from Bæda. In one place he stops to explain his theory of government, his wish for a thicker population, his conception of national welfare as consisting in a due balance of the priest, the soldier, and the churl. The mention of Nero spurs him to an outbreak on the abuses of power. The cold Providence of Boethius gives way to an enthusiastic acknowledgment of the goodness of God. As he writes, his large-hearted nature flings off its royal mantle, and talks as a man to men. "Do not blame me," he prays, with a charming simplicity, "if any know Latin better than I, for every man must say what he says and do what he does according to his ability." But simple as was his aim, Ælfred created English literature. Before him, England possessed in her own tongue one great poem, that of Cædmon, and a train of ballads and battle songs. Prose she had none. The mighty roll of the books that fill her libraries begins with the translations of Ælfred, and above all with the Chronicle of his reign. It seems likely that the king's rendering of Bæda's history gave the first impulse towards the compilation of what is known as the English, or Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, which was certainly thrown into its present form during his reign. The meagre lists of the kings of Wessex and of the bishops of Winchester, which had been preserved from older times, were roughly

Digitized by Google

expanded into a national history by insertions from Bæda; but it is when it reaches the reign of Ælfred that the Chronicle suddenly widens into the vigorous narrative, full of life and originality, that marks the gift of a new power to the English tongue. Varying as it does from age to age in historic value, it remains the first vernacular history of any Teutonic people, the earliest and the most venerable monument of Teutonic prose. The writer of English history may be pardoned if he lingers too fondly over the figure of the king in whose court, at whose impulse, it may be in whose very words, English history begins.

### Section VI.—The West-Saxon Realm, 892-1016.

[*Authorities.*—Mainly the English Chronicle, which varies much during this period. Through the reign of Eadward it is copious, and a Mercian chronicle is embedded in it; its entries then become scanty, and are broken with grand English songs till the reign of Æthelred, when its fulness returns. "Florence of Worcester" is probably a translation of a copy of the Chronicle now lost. The "Laws" form the basis of our constitutional knowledge of the time, and fall into two classes. Those of Eadward, Æthelstan, Eadmund, and Eadgar are, like the earlier laws of Æthelberht and Ini, "mainly of the nature of amendments of custom." Those of Ælfred, Æthelred, Cnut, with those that bear the name of Eadward the Confessor, "aspire to the character of codes." All are printed in Mr. Thorpe's "Ancient Laws and Institutes of the Anglo-Saxons;" but the extracts given by Professor Stubbs ("Documents illustrative of English History," pp. 59–74) contain all that directly bears on our constitution. Mr. Kemble's "Codex Diplomaticus Ævi Saxonici," contains a vast mass of charters, &c., belonging to this period. The lives of Dunstan are given by Mabillon, and in the Bollandist "Acta Sanctorum" for May 19th.

---

**Mercia and the Dane**

The brunt of the invasion which at last broke under the Danish leader Hasting upon England fell mainly on the brave ealdorman whom the king had set over Mercia. After a year's fruitless struggle to force the strong position in which Ælfred covered Wessex, Hasting left his fastness in the Andredswald and crossed the Thames. But the energy of the Mercian leader was even more formidable than the patient strategy of the king. Followed by the Londoners Æthelred stormed the Danish camp at Benfleet, followed the host as it rode along Thames to rouse new revolts in Wales, caught it at Buttington, and defeated it with a great slaughter. Falling back on Essex, Hasting repeated his dash upon the west, but Æthelred drove him from his hold at Chester, and hung on his rear as he retreated to his camp on the Lee. Here Ælfred, free from all danger in Wessex, came to his lieutenant's aid, and the capture of the Danish ships by the two forts with which the king barred the river virtually ended the war. The Danes streamed back from Wales, whither they had retreated, to their

892.

895.



Digitized by Google

SEC. VI.

THE WEST-SAXON REALM.
892–1016.

old quarters in France, and the new English fleet drove the freebooters from the Channel.

*Ælfred's Death.* 901.

The death of Ælfred and Æthelred soon followed these exploits, but the fame of Mercia was safe in the hands of its "Lady," the daughter of Ælfred, Æthelflæd. During a few years of peace she girded her strength for the conquest of the "Five Boroughs," the rude Danish confederacy which had taken the place of the older Mercian kingdom. Derby represented the original Mercia in the upper Trent, Lincoln the Lindiswaras, Leicester the Middle-English, Stamford the province of the Gyrwas—the marshmen of the Fens—Nottingham probably that of the Southumbrians. The realm of Penda had become strongly Danish; each of the "Boroughs" seems to have been ruled by its earl with his separate "host;" within, twelve "lawmen" administered Danish law, while a common justice-court existed for the whole confederacy. In her attack on their powerful league Æthelflæd abandoned the older strategy of battle and raid for that of siege and fortress-building. Advancing along the line of Trent, she had fortified Tamworth and Stafford on its head-waters, when a rising in Gwent called her back to the Welsh border. Her army stormed Brecknock; and Owain, its king, no sooner fled for shelter to the Danes, in whose aid he had risen, than Æthelflæd at once closed on Derby. The raids of the Danes of Middle-England failed to draw the Lady of Mercia from her prey; and Derby was hardly her own when, turning southward, she forced the surrender of Leicester.

*Æthelflæd, the Lady of the Mercians.* 913–918.

Æthelflæd died in the midst of her triumphs, and Eadward at once annexed his sister's dominions. The brilliancy of her exploits had as yet eclipsed his own, but the son of Ælfred was a vigorous and active ruler; he had repulsed a dangerous inroad of the Northmen from France, summoned no doubt by the cry of distress from their brethren in England, and had bridled East-Anglia to the south by the erection of forts at Hertford and Witham. He now undertook the systematic reduction of the Danelagh, as the district occupied by the Danes began to be called. South of the Middle-English and the Fens lay a tract watered by the Ouse and the Nen—originally the district of a tribe known as the South-English, and now, like the Five Boroughs of the north, grouped round the towns of Bedford, Huntingdon, and Northampton. The reduction of these was followed by that of East-Anglia; the Danes of the Fens submitted with Stamford, the Southumbrians with Nottingham. Eadward's Mercian troops had already seized Manchester, he himself was preparing to complete his conquests, when the whole of the north suddenly laid itself at his feet. Not merely Northumbria, but the Scots and the Britons of Strathclyde, "chose him to father and lord." The submission had probably been brought about, like that of the North-Welsh to Ælfred, by the pressure of mutual feuds, and it was as valueless as theirs. Within a year after

**Wessex and the Danelagh.**

*Eadward the Elder.* 901–925.

Digitized by Google

Eadward's death the north was again on fire. Æthelstan, Ælfred's golden-haired grandson, whom the king had girded as a child with a sword set in a golden scabbard and a gem-studded belt, incorporated Northumbria with his dominions; then turning westward broke a league which had been formed between the North-Welsh and the Scots, forced them to pay annual tribute, to march in his armies, and to attend his councils. The West-Welsh of Cornwall were reduced to a like vassalage, and finally driven from Exeter, which they had shared till then with its English inhabitants. The revolt of the King of the Scots, Constantine, was punished by an army which wasted his kingdom, while a fleet ravaged its coasts to Caithness. But the revolt only heralded the formidable confederacy in which Scotland, Cumberland, and the British and Danish chiefs of the west and east rose at the appearance of the fleet of Anlaf in the Humber. The king's victory at Brunanburh, sung in noblest war-song, seemed the wreck of Danish hopes, but the work of conquest was still to be done. On Æthelstan's death, the Danelagh rose again in revolt; and though the young King Eadmund won back the Five Boroughs, the peace which was negotiated by the two archbishops, Oda and Wulfstan, restored the old balance of Ælfred's day, and re-established Watling Street as the boundary between Wessex and the Danes.

*Æthelstan.* 925–940.

*Brunanburh.* 937

*Eadmund.* 940–946.

The completion of the West-Saxon realm was in fact reserved for the hands, not of a king or warrior, but of a priest. Dunstan stands first in the line of ecclesiastical statesmen who counted among them Lanfranc and Wolsey, and ended in Laud. He is still more remarkable in himself, in his own vivid personality after eight centuries of revolution and change. He was born in the little hamlet of Glastonbury, beside Ini's church; his father, Heorstan, was a man of wealth, and brother of the bishops of Wells and of Winchester. It must have been in his father's hall that the fair, diminutive boy, with his scant but beautiful hair, caught his charm over animals, his love for "the vain songs of ancient heathendom, the trifling legends, the funeral chaunts," which afterwards roused against him the charge of sorcery. Thence, too, he may have derived his passionate love of music, and his custom of carrying his harp in hand on journey or visit. The wandering scholars of Ireland had left their books in the monastery of Glastonbury, as they left them along the Rhine and the Danube; and Dunstan plunged into the study of sacred and profane letters till his brain broke down in delirium. His knowledge became famous in the neighbourhood and reached the court of the king, but his appearance there was the signal for a burst of ill-will among the courtiers, many of whom were probably kinsmen of his own. They drove him from the king's train, threw him from his horse as he passed through the marshes; and, with the wild passion of their age, trampled him under foot in the mire. The outrage ended in fever, and Dunstan rose from

**Dunstan.**



Digitized by Google

SEC. VI.

THE WEST-SAXON REALM. 892–1016.

his sick-bed a monk. But his devotion took no ascetic turn. His nature was sunny, versatile, artistic; full of strong affections, and capable of inspiring others with affections as strong. Quick-witted, of tenacious memory, a ready and fluent speaker, gay and genial in address, an artist, a musician, he was at the same time an indefatigable worker, busy at books, at building, at handicraft. His monastic profession seems to have been little more than a vow of celibacy. Throughout his manhood he won the affection of women; he now became the chaplain and guide of a woman of high rank, who lived only for charity and the entertainment of pilgrims. "He ever clave to her, and loved her in wondrous fashion." The wealth of his devotee was placed unreservedly at his command; his sphere began to widen; we see him followed by a train of pupils, busy with literature, writing, harping, painting, designing. One morning a lady summons him to her house to design a robe which she is embroidering. As he bends with her maidens over their toil, his harp hung upon the wall sounds without mortal touch tones which the excited ears around frame into a joyous antiphon. The tie which bound him to this scholar-life was broken by the death of his patroness, and Dunstan was suddenly called to a wider sphere of activity by the accession of Eadmund. But the old jealousies revived at his reappearance at court, and counting the game lost Dunstan prepared again to withdraw. The king had spent the day in the chase; the red deer which he was pursuing dashed over Cheddar cliffs, and his horse only checked itself on the brink of the ravine while Eadmund in the bitterness of death was repenting of his injustice to Dunstan. He was at once summoned on the king's return. "Saddle your horse," said Eadmund, "and ride with me." The royal train swept over the marshes to his home; and the king, bestowing on him the kiss of peace, seated him in the priestly chair as Abbot of Glastonbury.

943.

**Dunstan's administration.**

*Eadred.* 946–955.

The hand of the new minister was soon seen in the settlement of the north. He seized on the Scots as a balance to the Danes, and secured the aid of their king by investing him with the fief of Cumberland. Northumbria at once fell into Eadmund's hands, and submitted peaceably at his death to his brother Eadred. A revolt two years later enabled Dunstan to fling the head of the Danish resistance, the Archbishop of York, Wulstan, into prison, and to depose him from his see, while the Northumbrian realm sank into an earldom under Oswulf. On Eadgar's accession, the minister hastened to complete his work. The great earldom was broken into three portions; Oswulf retained the central part between Tees and Tweed which appropriated to itself the larger title of the whole; Deira, revived for Earl Oslac, became our Yorkshire. The Scot king, Kenneth, already secured by the grant of Cumberland, was now probably bound to the English supremacy by the grant of Northern Northumbria, the county between the Forth and

Digitized by Google

the Tweed. The grant was more important in its bearing on the history of Scotland than on our own. Lothian became the chief abode of its new rulers, Edinburgh their capital. The Scot kings were absorbed into the mass of their English subjects, and renounced their old Gaelic for the English tongue. But the settlement of the north already indicated the large and statesmanlike course which Dunstan was to pursue in the general administration of the realm. He seems to have adopted from the beginning a national rather than a West-Saxon policy. The charge against his later rule, that he gave too much power to the Dane and too much love to strangers, is the best proof of the unprovincial temper of his administration. In the code which he promulgated he expressly reserved to the north its old Danish rights, "with as good laws as they best might choose." The resentment of Wessex was seen in the revolution which followed on the death of Eadred. His successor, Eadwig, had contracted an uncanonical marriage; he added to the irritation of the prelates by withdrawing to his queen's chamber in the midst of the coronation feast. Dunstan, commissioned by the bishops and nobles, drew him roughly into the hall. The wrath of the boy-king drove the abbot over sea, and his whole system went with him. The kingdom at once broke up; Mercia and Northumbria cast off the rule of Wessex, and chose Eadgar, the brother of Eadwig, for their king.

*Eadwig.* 955–958.

**Dunstan the Primate.**

Dunstan was recalled by the Mercian Witenagemot, and received for Eadgar the sees of London and Winchester. When the scandals of Eadwig's misgovernment ended two years after in his death, Wessex submitted to the king who had been already accepted by the north, and Dunstan, now raised to the see of Canterbury, wielded for sixteen years as the minister of Eadgar the secular and ecclesiastical powers of the realm. Never had England seemed so strong or so peaceful. We have already noticed the settlement of the north; without, a fleet cruising round the coast reduced the Danes of Ireland beneath the English over-lordship; eight vassal kings rowed Eadgar after his coronation in his boat on the Dee. The death of King Eadmund had shown the internal disorder of the state; as the king feasted at Pucklechurch a robber, Leofa, whom he had banished, sate himself at the royal board and drew on the cupbearer who bade him retire. Eadmund, springing to his thegn's aid, seized the robber by his hair and flung him to the ground, but Leofa had stabbed the king ere rescue could arrive. The stern hand of Dunstan restored justice and order, while his care for commerce was shown in the laws which regulated the monetary standard and the enactments of common weights and measures for the realm. Thanet was ravaged when the wreckers of its coast plundered a trading ship from York. But the aims of the Primate-minister reached far beyond this outer revival of prosperity and good government. Time and the Northern war had dealt rudely with Ælfred's hopes; his

*Eadgar.* 958–975.

946.

Digitized by Google

educational movement had ceased with his death, the clergy had sunk back into worldliness and ignorance, not a single book or translation had been added to those which the king had left. Dunstan resumed the task, if not in the larger spirit of Ælfred, at least in the spirit of a great administrator. He had long sympathised with the revival of the stricter monasticism which had begun in the Abbey of Clugny, and he now devoted himself to its introduction into the English cloisters. He found vigorous aid in Oswald and Æthelwold, whom he had promoted to the sees of York and Winchester; a dream showed him a tree of wondrous height stretching its branches over Britain, its boughs loaded with countless cowls, the topmost twig crowned with a cowl of larger size than all. The tree—Dunstan interpreted—was England as it was to be, the big cowl Æthelwold. The three prelates pushed the movement roughly forward, expelling the secular canons from many of the cathedrals, and founding forty new abbeys. The abbeys were schools as well as monasteries. Dunstan himself while Abbot was famous as a teacher, Ethelwold raised Abingdon into a school second only to Glastonbury. Abbo, the most notable scholar in Gaul, came from Fleury at the Primate's invitation.

*The later Constitution.*

After times looked back fondly to "Eadgar's Law," as it was called, in other words to the English Constitution as it shaped itself in the hands of Eadgar's minister. Peace and change had greatly modified the older order which had followed on the English Conquest. Slavery was gradually disappearing before the efforts of the Church. Theodore had denied Christian burial to the kidnapper, and prohibited the sale of children by their parents after the age of seven. Ecgberht of York punished any sale of child or kinsfolk with excommunication. The murder of a slave by lord or mistress, though no crime in the eye of the State, became a sin for which penance was due to the Church. The slave was exempted from toil on Sundays and holydays; here and there he became attached to the soil, and could only be sold with it; sometimes he acquired a plot of ground, and was suffered to purchase his own release. Æthelstan gave the slave-class a new rank in the realm by extending to it the same principles of mutual responsibility for crime which were the basis of order among the free. The Church was far from contenting herself with this gradual elevation; Wilfrith led the way in the work of emancipation by freeing two hundred and fifty serfs whom he found attached to his estate at Selsey. Manumission became frequent in wills, as the clergy taught that such a gift was a boon to the soul of the dead. At the Synod of Calcuith the bishops bound themselves to free at their decease all serfs on their estates who had been reduced to serfdom by want or crime. Usually the slave was set free before the altar or in the church-porch, and the Gospel-book bore written on its margins the record of his emancipation. Sometimes his lord placed him at the spot where four roads met.

*Decline of slavery.*

Digitized by Google

and bade him go whither he would. In the more solemn form of the law his master took him by the hand in full shire-meeting, showed him open road and door, and gave him the lance and sword of the freeman. The slave-trade from English ports was prohibited by law, but the prohibition long remained ineffective. A hundred years later than Dunstan the wealth of English nobles was said sometimes to spring from breeding slaves for the market. It was not till the reign of the first Norman king that the preaching of Wulstan and the influence of Lanfranc suppressed the trade in its last stronghold, the port of Bristol.

**The later English kingdom.**

But the decrease of slavery was more than compensated by the increasing degradation of the bulk of the people. Much, indeed, of the dignity of the free farmer had depended on the contrast of his position with that of the slave; free among his equals, he was lord among his serfs. But the change from freedom to villenage, from the freeholder who knew no superior but God and the law to the tenant bound to do service to his lord, which was annihilating the old English liberty in the days of Dunstan, was owing mainly to a change in the character of English kingship. The union of the English realms had removed the king, as his dominions extended, further and further from his people, and clothed him with a mysterious dignity. Religion had told against political independence. With Ælfred the king becomes "the Lord's anointed," treason against him is punished with death; even the bishop, once his equal in life-value, sinks to the level of the caldorman. The caldorman himself, once the hereditary ruler of a smaller state, becomes from Ælfred's time the mere delegate of the king; his authority is curtailed by that of the royal reeves, officers despatched to levy the royal revenues and administer the royal justice. The older nobility of blood died out before the new nobility of the court. From the oldest times of Germanic history each chief or king had his war-band, his comrades, warriors bound personally to him by their free choice, sworn to fight for him to the death, and avenge his cause as their own. When Cynewulf of Wessex was foully slain at Merton his comrades "ran at once to the spot, each as he was ready and as fast as he could," and despising all offers of life, fell fighting over the corpse of their lord. The fidelity of the war-band was rewarded with grants from the royal domain; the king became their lord or hlaford, "the dispenser of gifts;" the comrade became his "servant" or thegn. Personal service with such a lord was held not to degrade, but to ennoble; "dish-thegn," and "bower-thegn," and "horse-thegn," became great officers of state. The older nobility were gradually supplanted by the new; the thegn advanced with the advance of the king; he absorbed every post of honour, and became caldorman, reeve, bishop, judge; while the common ground of the mark now became folk-land in the hands of the king, and was carved out into estates for his dependants.

*The king.*

*The thegn.*

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI.

THE WEST-SAXON REALM. 892-1016.

**Decline of the English freeman.**

With the advance of the thegn fell the freedom of the peasant. The principle of personal allegiance embodied in the new nobility widened into a theory of general dependence. By Ælfred's day it was assumed that no man could exist without a lord. The ravages and the long insecurity of the Danish wars aided to drive the free farmer to seek protection from the thegn. His freehold was surrendered to be received back as a fief, laden with service to its lord. Gradually the "lordless man" became a sort of outlaw in the realm. The free churl sank into the villein, and with his personal freedom went his share in the government of the state. Every freeman was his own legislator, in the meeting of the mark, or of the shire, or of the kingdom. In each the preliminary discussion rested with the nobler sort, the final decision with all. The clash of arms, the "yea" or "nay" of the crowd, were its vote. The union of the different kingdoms seemed only to widen and exalt the power of the English freeman, for he was by right a member of the "great meeting" as of the smaller, and in that "assembly of the wise" lay the rule of the realm. It could elect or depose the king. The higher justice, the imposition of taxes, the making of laws, the conclusion of treaties, the control of war, the disposal of public lands, the appointment of great officers of state, belonged to the Great Assembly. But with this power the freeman had really less and less to do. The larger the kingdom the greater grew the distance from his home. His part in the shire-moot was necessarily less than in his own mark-moot; his share in the general deliberations of the realm dwindled to nothing. There was no election of delegates; the freeman appeared in person or not at all. The only relic of the popular character of English government lay at last in the ring of citizens who at London or Winchester gathered round the Wise Men and shouted their "ay" or "nay" at the election of a king. Practically the national council shrank into a gathering of the great officers of Church and State with the royal thegns, and the old English democracy passed into an oligarchy of the closest kind.

**Fall of the West-Saxon Kingdom.**

It is in this degradation of the class in which its true strength lay, that we must look for the cause of the ruin which already hung over the West-Saxon realm. Fresh virulence was added to the reaction against the system of Dunstan by his rough treatment of the married clergy, and the violent transfer of property which his measures necessitated. For a time the discontent was quelled by the energy of the primate; seizing his cross, he settled the dispute over Eadgar's successor by the coronation of his son Eadward, and confronted his enemies successfully in three assemblies of the Wise. In that of Calne the floor of the room gave way, and Dunstan and his friends alone remained unhurt. But not even the fame of a miracle sufficed to turn the tide. The assassination of Eadward was followed by a West-Saxon triumph, and the thegns of the south broke out in "great joy" at the

*Eadward the Martyr.* 975-978.

Digitized by Google

coronation of his brother Æthelred. Dunstan withdrew to die at Canterbury, and with his withdrawal the artificial kingdom which his genius had built up fell at once to the ground. All hope of national union was ruined by the selfish provincialism of Wessex. The immediate resumption of Danish hostilities, the practical secession of the north, followed naturally on the accession of Æthelred. Within, the new king was at war with his clergy and with Mercia, ravaging the see of Rochester, and driving Ælfric, the ealdorman of the former province, into temporary banishment. Execrated as traitors by the West-Saxons and their king, the Mercian earls seem to have aimed at the restoration of the old political balance, perhaps at the revival of the yet older independence which Wessex had swept away. Weakened by the ceaseless attacks of the Danes, Æthelred was forced by their coalition with the clerical party under Archbishop Sigeric, the inheritor of the policy of Dunstan, to buy a truce from the invaders and to suffer them to settle peacefully in the land. A fresh attempt to expel them threw Ælfric openly into their arms, and the kingdom of Æthelred shrunk into the realms of Wessex and Kent. On these through five years fell the full fury of the Danish onset, till peace was again purchased by a heavy bribe, and by a promise to afford pay and subsistence to the Northmen who chose to settle in Wessex. But the peace only served as a screen for the basest treachery. Urged by secret orders from the king, the West-Saxons rose on St. Brice's Day and pitilessly massacred the Danes scattered defencelessly among them. The tower of St. Frideswide, in which those of Oxford had taken refuge, was burnt with them to the ground. Gunhild, the sister of their King Swegen, a Christian convert, and one of the hostages for the peace, saw husband and child butchered before her eyes ere she fell threatening vengeance on her murderers. Swegen swore at the news to wrest England from Æthelred. For four years he marched through the length and breadth of Wessex, "lighting his war-beacons as he went" in blazing homestead and town. Then for a heavy bribe he withdrew, to prepare for a later and more terrible onset. But there was no rest for the realm. The fiercest of the Norwegian jarls took his place, and from Wessex the war extended over Mercia and East-Anglia. Canterbury was taken and sacked, Ælfheah the Archbishop dragged to Greenwich, and there, in default of ransom, brutally slain. The Danes set him in the midst of their husting, pelting him with bones and skulls of oxen, till one more pitiful than the rest clove his skull with an axe.

*Æthelred the Unready.* 979–1016.

997–1002.

*Massacre of Danes.* 1002.

1003–1007.

1011.

It was not so much the imbecility of Æthelred which paralysed the struggle against the Danes as the practical secession of England north of the Thames, and when this Northern England passed from inactivity to active effort the struggle was over in a moment. Northumbria and Mercia at last threw themselves with Swegen on Wessex. The war was terrible but short. Everywhere the country was pitilessly

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI.

THE WEST-SAXON REALM.

**892–1016.**

harried, churches plundered, men slaughtered. But, with the one exception of London, there was no attempt at resistance. Oxford and Winchester flung open their gates. The thegns of Wessex submitted to the Northmen at Bath. Even London was forced at last to give way, and Æthelred fled over sea to a refuge in Normandy. With the flight of the king ends the long struggle of Wessex for supremacy over Britain. The task which had baffled the energies of Eadwine and Offa proved too hard for the valour of Eadward and the statesmanship of Dunstan. Wessex, Mercia, and Northumbria remained separate political bodies which no efforts of force or policy seemed able to fuse into one.

Digitized by Google

# CHAPTER II.

## ENGLAND UNDER FOREIGN KINGS.

### 1013—1204.

### Section I.—The Danish Kings.

[*Authorities.*—We are still aided by the collections of royal laws and charters. The English Chronicle is here of great importance; its various copies differ much in tone, &c., from one another, and may to some extent be regarded as distinct works. Florence of Worcester is probably the translator of a valuable copy of the Chronicle which has disappeared. The authority of the contemporary biographer of Eadward (in Luard's "Lives of Eadward the Confessor," published by the Master of the Rolls) is "primary," says Mr. Freeman, "for all matters strictly personal to the King and the whole family of Godwine. He is, however, very distinctly not an historian, but a biographer, sometimes a laureate." All modern accounts of this reign have been superseded by the elaborate history of Mr. Freeman (Norman Conquest, vol. ii.).]

**The foreign rule.**

BRITAIN had become England in the five hundred years that followed the landing of Hengest, and its conquest had ended in the settlement of its conquerors, in their conversion to Christianity, in the birth of a national literature, of an imperfect civilization, of a rough political order. But through the whole of this earlier age every attempt to fuse the various tribes of conquerors into a single nation had failed. The effort of Northumbria to extend her rule over all England had been foiled by the resistance of Mercia, that of Mercia by the resistance of Wessex. Wessex itself, even under the guidance of great kings and statesmen, had no sooner reduced the country to a seeming unity than local independence rose again at the call of the Danes. The tide of supremacy rolled in fact backwards and forwards; now the South won lordship over the North, now the North won lordship over the South. But whatever titles Kings might assume, or however imposing their rule might appear, Northumbrian remained apart from West-Saxon, Dane from Englishman. A common national sympathy held the country roughly together, but a real national union had yet to come.

Through the two hundred years that lie between the flight of Æthelred from England to Normandy and that of John from Normandy to England our story is a story of foreign rule. Kings from Denmark were succeeded by Kings from Normandy, and these by

Digitized by Google

SEC. I. THE DANISH KINGS. 1013-1042.

Kings from Anjou. Under Dane, Norman, or Angevin, Englishmen were a subject race, conquered and ruled by foreign masters, and yet it was in these years of slavery that England really became the England that we know. Provincial differences were crushed into national unity by the pressure of the stranger. The same pressure redressed the wrong which had been done to the fabric of national society by the degradation of the free farmer at the close of the preceding age into a feudal dependant on his lord. The English lord himself was pushed from his place by the barons of the Conquest, and sank into the position from which he had thrust the churl. The middle class, thus created, was reinforced by the rise of a similar class in our towns; commerce and trade were promoted by the justice and policy of the Kings, and with their progress rose the political importance of the trader. The boroughs of England, which at the opening of this period were for the most part mere villages, were rich enough at its close to buy liberty from the Crown. Rights of self-government, of free speech, of common deliberation, which had passed under the later rule of our English Sovereigns from the people at large into the hands of its nobles, and from them at the Conquest into the hands of the Crown, revived in the charters and councils of the towns. A moral revival followed hard on this political development. The occupation of every see and abbacy by strangers who could only speak to their flocks in an unknown tongue converted religion from a superstition into a reality as it passed from the priest to the people, and hermit and friar carried spiritual life home to the heart of the nation at large. At the same time the close connection with the Continent which necessarily resulted from the foreign origin of our sovereigns secured for their realm a free communion with the intellectual and artistic life of the world around. The old mental stagnation was at once broken up, and art and literature covered England with great buildings and busy schools. Time for this varied progress was gained by the long peace which England owed to the firm government of her Kings, while their political ability gave her administrative order, and their judicial reforms built up the fabric of her law. In a word, it is to the stern discipline of these two hundred years that we owe not merely English wealth and English freedom, but England itself.

**Our Danish Kings.**

The first of our foreign masters was the Dane. The countries of Scandinavia which had so long been the mere starting-points of the pirate-bands who had ravaged England and Ireland were now settling down into comparative order. It was the aim of Swend to unite them in a great Scandinavian Empire, of which England should be the head, and this project, interrupted for a time by his death, was resumed with yet greater vigour by his son. The fear of the Dane was still great in the land, and Cnut had no sooner appeared off the English coast than the wise men of Wessex, Mercia, and Northumberland joined in

Digitized by Google

owning him for their lord, and in discarding again the rule of Æthelred, who had returned on the death of Swend. With the sole support of London and part of Wessex, and for a time that of Mercia, Eadmund Ironside, the son and successor of Æthelred, who passed away at the opening of the new contest, struggled for a few months against the Danish forces; but a decisive victory at Assandun and the death of his rival left Cnut master of the realm. Conqueror as he was, the Dane was no foreigner in the sense that the Norman was a foreigner after him. His language differed little from the English tongue. He brought in no new system of tenure or government. Cnut ruled, in fact, not as a conqueror but as a king. The goodwill and tranquillity of England was necessary, in fact, for the success of his larger schemes in the North, where the arms of his English subjects aided him in uniting Denmark, Norway, and Sweden beneath his sway. Dismissing therefore his Danish "host," and retaining only a trained body of household troops, the hus-carls, who form the origin of our standing army, Cnut boldly relied for support within his realm on the justice and good government he secured it. His aim during twenty years seems to have been to obliterate from men's minds the foreign character of his rule, and the bloodshed in which it had begun. The change in himself was as startling as the change in his policy. When he first appears in England, it is as the mere Northman, passionate, revengeful, uniting the guile of the savage with his thirst for blood. His first acts of government were a series of murders. Eadric of Mercia, whose aid had given him the crown, was no sooner useless than at a sign from Cnut he was felled by an axe-blow in the King's presence. A similar assassination removed Eadwig, the brother of Eadmund Ironside. Ironside himself was believed to have been poisoned by the King's agents, while his children were hunted even into Hungary by his ruthless hate. From a mere savage such as this Cnut rose abruptly into the wise and temperate king. Stranger as he was, he deliberately fell back on the older policy of Dunstan; and while restoring "Eadgar's law," the constitution which secured a separate political existence to North and South alike, he acknowledged no difference between conqueror and conquered, between Dane and Englishman. By the erection of four Earldoms, those of Mercia, Northumberland, Wessex, and East Anglia, he recognized provincial independence, but he drew closer than of old the ties which bound the rulers of these great dependencies to the Crown. His attitude towards national feeling was yet nobler. The Church had been the centre of national resistance to the Dane, but Cnut sought above all its friendship. He paid homage to the cause for which Ælfheah had died, by his translation of the Archbishop's body to Canterbury. He atoned for his father's ravages by costly gifts to the religious houses. He protected English pilgrims against the robber-lords of the Alps,



**Cnut.**

1016–1035.

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
THE DANISH KINGS.
1013-1042.

and English bishops against the exactions of the Papacy. His love for the monks broke out in the song which he composed as he listened to their chaunt at Ely:. "Merrily sung the monks of Ely when Cnut King rowed by " across the vast fen-waters that surrounded their abbey. "Row, boatmen, near the land, and hear we these monks sing."

Cnut's letter from Rome to his English subjects marks the grandeur of his character, and the noble conception he had formed of kingship. "I have vowed to God to lead a right life in all things," wrote the King, "to rule justly and piously my realms and subjects, and to administer just judgment to all. If heretofore I have done aught beyond what was just, through headiness or negligence of youth, I am ready, with God's help, to amend it utterly." No royal officer, either for fear of the King or for favour of any, is to consent to injustice, none is to do wrong to rich or poor, "as they would value my friendship and their own well-being." He especially denounces unfair exactions: "I have no need that money be heaped together for me by unjust demands." "I have sent this letter before me," Cnut ends, "that all the people of my realm may rejoice in my well-doing; for as you yourselves know, never have I spared, nor will I spare, to spend myself and my toil in what is needful and good for my people."

**England at peace.**

Cnut's greatest gift to his people was that of peace. With him began the long internal tranquillity which marked the rule of our foreign masters. During two hundred years, with the one terrible interval of the Norman Conquest, and the long disturbance under Stephen, England alone among the kingdoms of Europe enjoyed unbroken repose. The wars of her Kings lay far from her shores, in France or Normandy, or, as with Cnut, in the more distant lands of the North. The stern justice of their government secured order within. The absence of internal discontent under Cnut, perhaps too the exhaustion of the kingdom after the terrible Danish inroads, is proved by its quiet during his frequent periods of absence. Even

***The Forest Laws.***

the oppressive Forest Laws, which he was probably the first to enact, witness indirectly to the growing wealth and prosperity. The greater part of English soil was still utterly uncultivated. A good third of the land was probably covered with wood, thicket, or scrub; another third consisted of heaths and moor. In both the East and the West there were vast tracts of marsh land; fens nearly one hundred miles long severed East Anglia from the midland counties; sites like that of Glastonbury or Athelney were almost inaccessible. The bustard roamed over the downs, the beaver still haunted Beverley, huntsmen roused the bear in its forest lair, the London craftsmen chased the wild boar and the wild ox in the woods of Hampstead, while wolves prowled round the homesteads of the North. Cnut's Law proves that peace, and the industry it encouraged, were already telling

Digitized by Google

on this waste. Protection for the "wild deer" could only be thought of when stag and bittern were retreating before the face of man, when the farmer's axe was ringing in the forest, and villages springing up in the clearings.

But the King lost more than his hunting as the forest shrank into narrower bounds. He lost power. The common law ran only where the plough ran. Marsh and moor and woodland knew no master but the King, no law but his absolute will; and Cnut was the first to embody this will in the written form of the "Forest Law."

His code began a struggle between king and people, which we shall see raging through two centuries of our history, but it began it unconsciously. Cnut's one aim was to win the love of his people, and all tradition shows how wonderful was his success. But the Danish rule ended with his death. Denmark and England, parted for a few years by the accession of his son Harold to the throne of the last, were re-united under a second son, Harthacnut; but the love which Cnut's justice had won turned to hatred before the lawlessness of his successors. The long peace sickened men of this fresh outburst of bloodshed and violence. "Never was a bloodier deed done in the land since the Danes came," ran the popular song, when Harold's men seized Ælfred, the brother of Eadmund Ironside, who had attacked England from Normandy. Every tenth man was killed, the rest sold for slaves, and Ælfred's eyes torn out at Ely. Harthacnut, more savage even than his predecessor, dug up his brother's body and flung it into a marsh; while a rising at Worcester against his hus-carls was punished by the burning of the town and the pillage of the shire. His death was no less brutal than his life; "he died as he stood at his drink in the house of Osgod Clapa at Lambeth." England wearied of kings like these: but their crimes helped her to free herself from the impossible dream of Cnut. The North, still more barbarous than herself, could give her no new element of progress or civilization. It was the consciousness of this, and the hatred of such rulers as Harold and Harthacnut, which co-operated with the old feelings of reverence for the past in calling back the line of Ælfred to the throne.

**Fall of the Danish rule.**

*Harold.* 1035–1039.

*Harthacnut.* 1040–1042.

### Section II.—The English Restoration, 1042-1066.

It is in such transitional moments of a nation's history as this that it needs the cool prudence, the sensitive selfishness, the quick perception of what is possible, which distinguished the adroit politician whom the death of Cnut left supreme in England. Godwine is memorable in our history as the first English statesman who was neither king nor priest. Originally of obscure origin, his ability had raised him high in the royal favour; he was allied to the King by marriage, and entrusted by him with the earldom of Wessex. In the wars of Scandinavia he

**Godwine**

Digitized by Google

SEC. II. THE ENGLISH RESTORATION. 1042–1066.

had shown courage and skill at the head of a body of English troops who supported Cnut, but his true field of action lay at home. Shrewd, eloquent, an active administrator, Godwine united vigilance, industry, and caution with a singular dexterity in the management of men. During the troubled years that followed the death of Cnut he had done his best to continue his master's policy in securing the internal union of England under a Danish sovereign and in preserving her connection with the North. But at the death of Harthacnut Cnut's policy had become impossible, and abandoning the Danish cause Godwine drifted with the tide of popular feeling which called Eadward to the throne.

**Eadward the Confessor.** 1042–1066.

Eadward the son of Æthelred had lived from his youth in exile at the court of Normandy. A halo of tenderness spread in after-time round this last King of the old English stock; legends told of his pious simplicity, his blitheness and gentleness of mood, the holiness that gained him his name of "Confessor" and enshrined him as a saint in his abbey-church at Westminster. Gleemen sang in manlier tones of the long peace and glories of his reign, how warriors and wise councillors stood round his throne, and Welsh and Scot and Briton obeyed him. His was the one figure that stood out bright against the darkness when England lay trodden under foot by Norman conquerors; and so dear became his memory that liberty and independence itself seemed incarnate in his name. Instead of freedom, the subject of William or Henry called for the "good laws of Eadward the Confessor." But it was as a mere shadow of the past that the exile really returned to the throne of Ælfred; there was something shadow-like in the thin form, the delicate complexion, the transparent womanly hands that contrasted with the blue eyes and golden hair of his race; and it is almost as a shadow that he glides over the political stage. The work of government was done by sterner hands. The King's weakness left Godwine master of the realm, and he ruled firmly and wisely. Abandoning with reluctance all interference in Scandinavian politics, he guarded England with a fleet which cruised year by year along the coast. Within, though the earldoms still remained jealously independent, there were signs that a real political unity was being slowly brought about; the royal writs "ran," as the phrase went, to the furthest borders of Mercia and Northumbria.

**Fall of Godwine.**

It was indeed the increasing sense of order and law, the growing moral consciousness of Englishmen that brought about Godwine's fall. He alone stood untouched by the religious movement of his time, by the enthusiasm which showed itself in monastic foundations or superstitious piety or a stricter administration of Church patronage. Godwine was the founder of no religious house: he was the plunderer, as every monk believed, of many. His whole mind seemed set on the aggrandizement of his family. He had given his daughter to the King as wife. His own earldom embraced all England south of

Digitized by Google

Thames. His son Harold was Earl of East Anglia, while Mercia had been dismembered to provide another earldom for his son Swegen. It was Swegen's lawlessness which roused an ill-will that all this greed and ambition would hardly have excited. He had seduced the abbess of Leominster, had sent her home again with a yet more outrageous demand of her hand in marriage, and on the King's refusal to grant it had fled from the realm. Godwine's influence secured his pardon, but on his very return to seek it Swegen kidnapped and murdered his cousin Beorn, who had opposed the reconciliation. He again fled to Flanders, and a storm of national indignation followed him over sea. The meeting of the Wise men branded him as "nithing," the "utterly worthless," yet in a year his father had again wrested a pardon from the King and restored him to his earldom. The scandalous inlawing of such a criminal left Godwine alone in a struggle which soon arose with Eadward himself. The King was, as we have seen, a stranger in his realm, and his sympathies lay naturally with the home and friends of his youth and exile. He spoke the Norman tongue. He used in Norman fashion a seal for his charters. He set Norman favourites in the highest posts of Church and State. Strangers such as these, though hostile to the minister, were powerless against Godwine's influence and ability, and when at a later time they ventured to stand alone against him they fell without a blow. But the general ill-will enabled them at this moment to stir Eadward to attack the Earl. A quarrel brought the opportunity. On his return from a visit to the Court, Eustace Count of Boulogne, the husband of the King's sister, demanded quarters for his train in Dover. Strife arose, and many both of the burghers and foreigners were slain. All Godwine's better nature withstood Eadward, when the King angrily bade him exact vengeance from the town for the affront to his kinsman; but he claimed a fair trial for the townsmen only to find himself arraigned with them as a criminal. He at once gathered his forces and marched upon Gloucester, demanding the expulsion of the foreign favourites; but even in a just quarrel the country was cold in his support. The Earls of Mercia and Northumberland united their forces to those of Eadward, and in a gathering of Wise men at London Swegen's outlawry was renewed, while Godwine, declining with his usual prudence a useless struggle, withdrew over sea to Flanders.

*Exile of Godwine.* 1051.

But the wrath of the nation was appeased by his fall. Great as were Godwine's faults, he was the one man who now stood between England and the rule of the strangers who flocked to the Court; and a year had hardly passed when at the appearance of his fleet in the Thames Eadward was once more forced to yield. The foreign prelates and bishops fled over sea, outlawed by the same meeting of the Wise men which restored Godwine to his home. He returned only to die, and the direction of affairs passed quietly to his son.

1052.



Digitized by Google

SEC. II.
THE ENGLISH RESTORATION.
1042–1066.
Earl Harold.
1053–1065.

Harold came to power unfettered by the obstacles which had beset his father, and for twelve years he was the actual governor of the realm. The courage, the ability, the genius for administration, the ambition and subtlety of Godwine were found again in his son. In the internal government of England he followed out his father's policy, while avoiding its excesses. Peace was preserved, justice administered, and the realm increased in wealth and prosperity. Its gold work and embroidery were famous in the markets of Flanders and France. But it was a prosperity poor in the nobler elements of national activity, and dead to the more vivid influences of spiritual life. Literature, which on the Continent was kindling into a new activity, died down in England into a few psalters and homilies. The few minsters raised by king or earls contrasted strangely with the religious enthusiasm which was covering Normandy and the Rhineland with stately buildings. National history there was none. Harold's temper harmonized singularly with the temper of his times. His whole statesmanship seemed to aim at inaction and repose. Disturbances from without he could crush sternly and rapidly; his military talents displayed themselves in a campaign against Wales, and in the boldness and rapidity with which, arming his troops with weapons adapted for mountain conflict, he penetrated to the heart of its fastnesses and reduced the country to complete submission. But good influences were kept at bay as firmly as evil. The Church sank into lethargy. Monasticism was the one religious power of the time, and Harold, like his father, hated monks. Stigand, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was the adherent of an antipope, and the highest dignity of the English Church was deliberately kept in a state of suspension. No ecclesiastical synod, no Church reform, broke the slumbers of its clergy. Abroad Europe was waking to a new revival of literature, of art, of religion, but England was all but severed from the Continent. Like Godwine, Harold's energy seemed to devote itself wholly to self-aggrandizement. As the childless Eadward drew to the grave his minister drew closer and closer to the throne. One obstacle after another was swept from his path. The rival house of Mercia fell crushed by the exile of Earl Ælfgar; a revolt of the Northumbrians, whether prompted by Harold or not, drove Tostig, his brother and most dangerous opponent, to Flanders. His aim was attained without a struggle, and the nobles and bishops who were gathered round the deathbed of the Confessor passed quietly at once from it to the election and coronation of Harold.

*Harold's accession.*

Digitized by Google

## Section III.—Normandy and the Normans, 912-1066.

[*Authorities.*—Dudo of S. Quentin, a verbose and confused writer, has preserved the earliest Norman traditions. His work is abridged and continued by William of Jumièges, a contemporary of the Conqueror, whose work forms the base of the "Roman de Rou," composed by Wace in the time of Henry the Second. The religious movement is best told by Ordericus Vitalis, a Norman writer of the twelfth century, gossiping and confused, but full of valuable information. For Lanfranc see "Lanfranci Opera, ed. Giles," and the life in Hook's "Archbishops of Canterbury." For Anselm see the admirable biography by the Rev. R. W. Church. The general history of Normandy is told diffusely but picturesquely by Sir F. Palgrave, "Normandy and England," more accurately and succinctly by Mr. Freeman, "History of Norman Conquest," vols. i. and ii.]

**Normandy.**

But the quiet of Harold's accession was at once broken by news of danger from a land which, strange as it seemed then, was soon to become almost a part of England itself. A walk through Normandy teaches one more of the age of our history which we are about to traverse than all the books in the world. The whole story of the Conquest stands written in the stately vault of the minster at Caen which still covers the tomb of the Conqueror. The name of each hamlet by the roadside has its memories for English ears; a fragment of castle wall marks the home of the Bruce, a tiny little village preserves the name of the Percy. The very look of the country and its people seem familiar to us; the peasant in his cap and blouse recalls the build and features of the small English farmer; the fields about Caen, with their dense hedgerows, their elms, their apple-orchards, are the very picture of an English country-side. On the windy heights around rise the square grey keeps which Normandy handed on to the cliffs of Richmond or the banks of Thames, while huge cathedrals lift themselves over the red-tiled roof of little market towns, the models of the stately fabrics which superseded the lowlier churches of Ælfred or Dunstan.

**The Norman settlement.**

Rolf the Ganger, or Walker, a pirate leader like Guthrum or Hasting, had wrested the land on either side the mouth of Seine from the French king, Charles the Simple, at the moment when Ælfred's children, Eadward and Æthelfled, were beginning their conquest of the English Danelagh. The treaty in which France purchased peace by this cession of the coast was a close imitation of the Peace of Wedmore. Rolf, like Guthrum, was baptized, received the King's daughter in marriage, and became his vassal for the territory which now took the name of "the Northman's land" or Normandy. But vassalage and the new

*Peace of Clair-sur-Epte. 912.*



Digitized by Google

SEC. III.

NORMANDY AND THE NORMANS. 912–1066.

faith sat alike lightly on the Dane. No such ties of blood and speech tended to unite the Northman with the French among whom he settled along the Seine, as united him to the Englishmen among whom he settled along the Humber. William Longsword, the son of Rolf, though wavering towards France and Christianity, remained Pagan and Dane in heart; he called in a Danish colony to occupy his conquest of the Cotentin, the peninsula which runs out from St. Michael's Mount to the cliffs of Cherbourg, and reared his boy among the Northmen of Bayeux, where the Danish tongue and fashions most stubbornly held their own. A heathen reaction followed his death, and the bulk of the Normans, with his boyish successor, fell away for the time from Christianity, while new pirate-fleets came swarming up the Seine. To the close of the century the whole people are still "Pirates" to the French around them, their land the "Pirates' land," their Duke the "Pirates' Duke."

**Civilization of Normandy.**

Yet in the end the same forces which merged the Dane in the Englishman told even more powerfully on the Dane in France. No race has ever shown a greater power of absorbing all the nobler characteristics of the peoples with whom they came in contact, or of infusing their own energy into them. During the long reign of Duke Richard the Fearless, the son of William Longsword, heathen Norman pirates became French Christians, and feudal at heart. The old Norse language lived only at Bayeux, and in a few names, such as those of "dale" and "bec," the dell and the stream, which marked the local features of the country. As the old Norse freedom died silently away, the descendants of the pirates became feudal nobles and the "pirates' land" sank into the most loyal of the fiefs of France. The change of manners was accompanied by an even sharper change of faith, a change which bound the land where heathendom had fought most stubbornly for life more closely than other lands to the cause of Christianity and the Church. The Dukes were the first to be touched by the new faith, but the religious movement had no sooner spread to the people than it was welcomed with an almost passionate fanaticism. Every road was crowded with pilgrims. Monasteries rose in every forest glade. Herlouin, a knight of Brionne, sought shelter from the world in a little valley edged in with woods of ash and elm, through which a beck or rivulet (to which his house owed its after-name) runs down to the Risle. He was one day busy building an oven with his own hands when a stranger greeted him with "God save you!" "Are you a Lombard?" asked the knight-abbot, struck with the foreign look of the man. "I am," he replied, and praying to be made a monk the stranger fell down at the mouth of the oven and kissed Herlouin's feet. The Lombard was Lanfranco of Pavia, a scholar of noble family and especially skilled in the traditions of the Roman law, who had wandered across the Alps to found a school at Avranches, and was now

945–996.

*Herlouin.*

*Bec.*

*Lanfranc at Bec.* 1045–1060.

Digitized by Google

drawn to a religious life by the fame of Herlouin's sanctity. The religious impulse was a real one, but Lanfranc was destined to be known rather as a great administrator and statesman than as a saint. His teaching raised Bec, in a few years, into the most famous school of Christendom: it was in fact the first wave of the intellectual movement which was spreading from Italy to the ruder countries of the West. The whole mental activity of the time seemed concentrated in the group of scholars who gathered round him; the fabric of the canon law and of mediæval scholasticism, with the philosophical scepticism which first awoke under its influence, all trace their origin to Bec.

**Anselm**

The most famous of these scholars was Anselm of Aosta, an Italian like Lanfranc himself, and who was soon to succeed him as Prior and teacher at Bec. Friends as they were, no two men could be more strangely unlike. Anselm had grown to manhood in the quiet solitude of his mountain-valley, a tender-hearted poet-dreamer, with a soul pure as the Alpine snows above him, and an intelligence keen and clear as the mountain air. The whole temper of the man was painted in a dream of his youth. It seemed to him as though heaven lay, a stately palace, amid the gleaming hill-peaks, while the women reaping in the corn-fields of the valley became harvest-maidens of its heavenly King. They reaped idly, and Anselm, grieved at their sloth, hastily climbed the mountain side to accuse them to their lord. As he reached the palace, the King's voice called him to his feet, and he poured forth his tale; then at the royal bidding bread of an unearthly whiteness was set before him, and he ate and was refreshed. The dream passed with the morning, but the sense of heaven's nearness to earth, the fervid loyalty to the service of his Lord, the tender restfulness and peace in the Divine presence which it reflected, became the life of Anselm. Wandering, like other Italian scholars, to Normandy, he became a monk under Lanfranc, and on his teacher's removal to higher duties succeeded him in the direction of the Abbey of Bec. No teacher has ever thrown a greater spirit of love into his toil. "Force your scholars to improve!" he burst out to another teacher who relied on blows and compulsion. "Did you ever see a craftsman fashion a fair image out of a golden plate by blows alone? Does he not now gently press it and strike it with his tools, now with wise art yet more gently raise and shape it? What do your scholars turn into under this ceaseless beating?" "They turn only brutal," was the reply. "You have bad luck," was the keen answer, "in a training that only turns men into beasts." The worst natures softened before this tenderness and patience. Even the Conqueror, so harsh and terrible to others, became another man, gracious and easy of speech, with Anselm.

1060.

But amidst his absorbing cares as a teacher, the Prior of Bec found

Digitized by Google

SEC. III. NORMANDY AND THE NORMANS. 912-1066.

time for philosophical speculations, to which we owe the great scientific inquiries which built up the theology of the middle ages. His famous works were the first attempts of any Christian thinker to elicit the idea of God from the very nature of the human reason. His passion for abstruse thought robbed him of food and sleep. Sometimes he could hardly pray. Often the night was a long watch till he could seize his conception and write it on the wax tablets which lay beside him. But not even a fever of intense thought such as this could draw Anselm's heart from its passionate tenderness and love. Sick monks in the infirmary could relish no drink save the juice which his hand had squeezed for them from the grape-bunch. In the later days of his archbishoprick a hare chased by the hounds took refuge under his horse, and his voice grew loud as he forbade a huntsman to stir in the chase, while the creature darted off again to the woods. Even the greed of lands for the Church to which so many religious men yielded found its characteristic rebuke, as the battling lawyers saw Anselm quietly close his eyes in court, and go peacefully to sleep.

## Section IV.—The Conqueror, 1042-1066

[*Authorities.*—Primarily the "Gesta Willelmi" of his chaplain, William of Poitiers, a violent partisan of the Duke. William of Jumièges is here a contemporary, and of great value. Orderic and Wace, with the other rhyming chronicle of Benvil de Saint Maur, come in the second place. For the invasion and Senlac we have, in addition, the contemporary "Carmen de Bello Hastingensi," by Guy, Bishop of Amiens, and the invaluable pictures of the Bayeux Tapestry. The English accounts are most meagre. The invasion and battle of Senlac are the subject of Mr. Freeman's third volume (Hist. of Norman Conquest).]

**The Conquests of the Normans.**

It was not this new fervour of faith only which drove Norman pilgrims in flocks to the shrines of Italy and the Holy Land. The old Norse spirit of adventure turned the pilgrims into Crusaders, and the flower of Norman knighthood, impatient of the stern rule of their Dukes, followed Roger de Toesny against the Moslem of Spain, or enlisted under the banner of the Greeks in their war with the Arabs who had conquered Sicily. The Crusaders became conquerors under Robert Guiscard, a knight who had left his home in the Cotentin with a single follower, but whose valour and wisdom soon placed him at the head of his fellow-soldiers in Italy. Attacking the Greeks, whom they had hitherto served, the Norman knights wrested Apulia from them in
1054-1080. an overthrow at Cannæ, Guiscard himself led them to the conquest of Calabria and the great trading cities of the coast, while thirty years of
1060-1090. warfare gave Sicily to the followers of his brother Roger. The two conquests were united under a line of princes to whose munificence art

Digitized by Google

owes the splendour of Palermo and Monreale, and literature the first outburst of Italian song. Normandy, still seething with vigorous life, was stirred to greed and enterprise by this plunder of the South, and the rumour of Guiscard's exploits roused into more ardent life the daring ambition of its Duke.

**William of Normandy.**

William the Great, as men of his own day styled him, William the Conqueror, as by one event he stamped himself on our history, was now Duke of Normandy. The full grandeur of his indomitable will, his large and patient statesmanship, the loftiness of aim which lifts him out of the petty incidents of his age, had still to be disclosed. But there never was a moment from his boyhood when he was not among the greatest of men. His life was one long mastering of difficulty after difficulty. The shame of his birth remained in his name of "the Bastard." His father, Duke Robert, had seen Arletta, the daughter of 1027. a tanner of the town, washing her linen in the little brook beneath the cliff of Falaise, and loving her had made her the mother of his boy. Robert's departure on a pilgrimage from which he never returned left William a child-ruler among the most turbulent baronage in Christendom, and treason and anarchy surrounded him as he grew to manhood. Disorder broke at last into open revolt. Surprised in his hunting-seat at Valognes by the rising of the Bessin and Cotentin districts, in which the Norse temper and lawlessness lingered longest, William had only time to dash through the fords of Vire with the rebels in his track. A fierce combat of horse on the slopes of Val-ès-dunes, to the south-eastward of Caen, left him master of the Duchy, and the old Scan- 1047. dinavian Normandy yielded for ever to the new civilization which streamed in with French alliances and the French tongue. William was himself a type of the transition. In the young Duke's character the old world mingled strangely with the new, the pirate jostled roughly with the statesman. William was the most terrible, as he was the last outcome of the Northern race. The very spirit of the sea-wolves who had so long lived on the pillage of the world seemed embodied in his gigantic form, his enormous strength, his savage countenance, his desperate bravery, the fury of his wrath, the ruthlessness of his revenge. "No knight under heaven," his enemies confessed, "was William's peer." Boy as he was, horse and man went down before his lance at Val-ès-dunes. All the gaiety of his fierce nature broke out in the chivalrous adventures of his youth, in his rout of fifteen Angevins with but five soldiers at his back, in his defiant ride over the disputed ground, hawk on fist, as though war and the chase were one. No man could bend his bow. His mace crashed its way through a ring of English warriors to the foot of the Standard. He rose to his greatest heights in moments when other men despaired. His voice rang out like a trumpet to rally his soldiers as they fled before the first English charge at Senlac. In his winter march on Chester he dismounted to put

Digitized by Google

himself at the head of his fainting troops, and helped with his own hands to clear a road through the snowdrifts. With the Norse daring broke out the Norse cruelty. His vengeance had no touch of human pity. When the revolted townsmen of Alençon hung out raw hides along their walls in scorn of the baseness of his birth, with cries of "Work for the Tanner!" William tore out the eyes of the prisoners he had taken, cut off their hands and feet, and flung them into the town. At the close of his greatest victory he refused Harold's body a grave. Thousands of Hampshire peasants were driven from their homes to make him a hunting-ground, and his harrying of Northumbria left the north of England a waste for a hundred years. There is a grim, ruthless ring about his very jests. In his old age Philip of France mocked at the Conqueror's unwieldy bulk, and at the sickness which confined him to his bed at Rouen. "King William has as long a lying-in," laughed his enemy, "as a woman behind her curtains!" "When I get up," swore William, "I will go to mass in Philip's land, and bring a rich offering for my churching. I will offer a thousand candles for my fee. Flaming brands shall they be, and steel shall glitter over the fire they make." At harvest tide, town and hamlet flaring into ashes along the French border fulfilled the Conqueror's vow. There is the same savage temper in the loneliness of his life. He recked little of men's love or hate. His grim look, his pride, his silence, his wild outbursts of passion, spread terror through his court. "Stark man he was, and great awe men had of him," was the comment of his subjects on his death. His graciousness to Anselm only brought out into stronger relief the general harshness of his tone. His very wrath was solitary. "To no man spake he, and no man dared speak to him," when the news reached him of Harold's accession to the throne. He found society only when he passed from the palace to the loneliness of the woods. "He loved the wild deer as though he had been their father. Whosoever should slay hart or hind man should blind him." Death itself took its colour from the savage solitude of his life. Priests and nobles fled as the last breath left him, and the Conqueror's body lay naked and lonely on the floor.

**William and France.**

It was the genius of William which lifted him out of this mere Norseman into the greatest general and statesman of his time. The growth of the Norman power was jealously watched by Geoffry Martel, the Count of Anjou, and his influence succeeded in converting France from friend to foe. The danger changed William at once from the chivalrous knight-errant of Val-ès-dunes into a wary strategist. As the French army crossed the border he hung cautiously on its flanks, till a division which had encamped in the little town of Mortemer had

1054. been surprised and cut to pieces by his soldiers. A second division was still held at bay by the Duke himself, when Roger de Toesny, climbing up into a tree, shouted to them the news of their comrades'

Digitized by Google

fall. "Up, up, Frenchmen! you sleep too long: go bury your friends that lie slain at Mortemer." A second and more formidable invasion four years later was met with the same cautious strategy. William hung on the Frenchmen's flank, looking coolly on while town and abbey were plundered, the Bessin ravaged, Caen sacked, and the invaders prepared to cross the Dive and carry fire and sword into the rich land of Lisieux. But only half the army was over the river when the Duke fell suddenly upon its rear. The fight raged till the rising of the tide cut the French forces, as William had foreseen, hopelessly in two. Huddled together on a narrow causeway, swept by the Norman arrows, knights, footmen, and baggage train were involved in the same ruin. Not a man escaped, and the French king, who had been forced to look on helplessly from the opposite bank, fled home to die. The death of Geoffry Martel left William without a rival among the princes of France. Maine, the border land between Normandy and Angevin, and which had for the last ten years been held by Anjou, submitted without a struggle to his rule. Brittany, which had joined the league of his foes, was reduced to submission by a single march.

1058.

1060.

All this activity abroad was far from distracting the Duke's attention from Normandy itself. It was hard to secure peace and order in a land filled with turbulent robber-lords. "The Norman must be trodden down and kept under foot," said one of their poets, "and he who bridles them may use them at his need." William "could never love a robber." His stern protection of trader and peasant roused the baronage through his first ten years to incessant revolt. His very kinsfolk headed the discontent, and summoned the French King to their aid. But the victories of Mortemer and Varaville left the rebels at his mercy. Some rotted in his dungeons, for "stark" as he was the Duke abhorred bloodshed; some were driven into exile, and joined the conquerors of Apulia and Sicily. The land settled down into peace and order, and William turned to the reform of the Church. Malger, the Archbishop of Rouen, a mere hunting and feasting prelate, was summarily deposed, and his place filled by Maurilius, a French ecclesiastic of piety and learning. Frequent councils under the Duke's guidance amended the morals of the clergy. The school of Bec, as we have seen, had become a centre of education; and William, with the keen insight into men which formed so marked a feature in his genius, selected its Prior as his chief adviser. In a strife with the Papacy which the Duke had provoked by his marriage with Matilda of Flanders, Lanfranc had shown himself an ardent partisan of Rome, and his opposition had been punished by a sentence of banishment. The Prior set out on a lame horse, the only one his house could afford, and was overtaken by the Duke, impatient that he should quit Normandy. "Give me a better horse and I shall go the quicker," replied the imperturbable Lombard, and the Duke's wrath passed into laughter

**William and Normandy.**

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV. THE CONQUEROR. 1042-1066.

and good-will. From that hour Lanfranc became his minister and counsellor, whether for the affairs of the Church or the more daring schemes of foreign oppression which were opened up to him by the position of England.

**England and the Normans.**

Quarrel after quarrel had for half a century been drawing the two countries nearer together. At the close of the reign of Richard the Fearless the Danish descents upon the English coast had found support in Normandy, and their fleet had wintered in her ports. It was to revenge these attacks that Ethelred had despatched a fleet across the Channel to ravage the Cotentin, but the fleet was repulsed and the strife appeased by Æthelred's marriage with Emma, a sister of Richard the Good. Æthelred with his children found shelter in Normandy from the Danish kings, and, if Norman accounts are to be trusted, contrary winds alone prevented a Norman fleet from undertaking their restoration. The peaceful recall of Eadward to the throne seemed to open England to Norman ambition, and Godwine was no sooner banished than Duke William appeared at the English court, and received, as he afterwards asserted, a promise of succession to its throne from the King. Such a promise, unconfirmed by the national assembly of the Wise men, was utterly valueless, and for the moment Godwine's recall put an end to William's hopes. They were revived by a storm which threw Harold, while cruising in the Channel, on the French coast, and forced him to swear on the relics of the saint to support the Duke's claim as the price of his own return to England: but the news of the King's death was at once followed by that of Harold's accession, and after a burst of furious passion the Duke prepared to enforce his claim by arms. William did not in any strict sense claim the crown. He claimed simply the right which he afterwards used, when his sword had won it, of presenting himself for election by the nation, and he believed himself entitled so to present himself by the direct commendation of the Confessor. The actual election of Harold, which stood in his way, hurried as it was, he did not recognize as valid. But with this constitutional claim was inextricably mingled his resentment at the private wrong which Harold had done him, and a resolve to exact vengeance on the man whom he regarded as untrue to his oath. The wrong-doing of Harold furnished indeed no just ground for shedding the blood of Englishmen, but even in modern times we have not learnt practically to dissociate the private acts of rulers from the public responsibility of their subjects.

1002.

**The eve of the struggle.**

The difficulties in the way of his enterprise were indeed enormous. He could reckon on no support within England itself. At home he had to extort the consent of his own reluctant baronage; to gather a motley host from every quarter of France, and to keep it together for months; to create a fleet, to cut down the very trees, to build, to launch, to man the vessels, and to find time amidst all this for the

Digitized by Google

common business of government, for negotiations with Denmark and the Empire, with France, Brittany, and Anjou, with Flanders and with Rome. His rival's difficulties were hardly less than his own. Harold was threatened with invasion by his brother Tostig, who had taken refuge in Norway, as well as by William; and the fleet and army he had gathered lay watching for months along the coast. His one standing force was his body of hus-carls, but their numbers only enabled them to act as the nucleus of an army. On the other hand, the Land-Fyrd, or general levy of fighting men, was a body easy to raise for any single encounter, but hard to keep together. To assemble such a force was to bring labour to a standstill. The men gathered under the King's standard were the farmers and ploughmen of their fields. The ships were the fishing-vessels of the coast. In September the task of holding them together became impossible, but 1066. their dispersion had hardly taken place when the two clouds which had so long been gathering burst at once upon the realm. A change of wind released the landlocked armament of William; but before changing, the wind which prisoned the Duke had flung the host of Harald Hardrada, the King of Norway, whose aid Tostig had enlisted, on the coast of his old earldom of Yorkshire. The King hastened with his household troops to the spot, and repulsed the invaders in a decisive overthrow at Stamford Bridge, in the neighbourhood of York, but ere he could hurry back to London the Norman host had crossed the sea, and William, who had anchored on the 28th off the shingly coast of Pevensey, was ravaging the coast to bring his rival to an engagement. To march inland would have been to cut himself off from his fleet, his one base of operations and only hope in case of defeat. His merciless ravages succeeded, as they were intended, in drawing Harold to an engagement; but the King judiciously refused to attack with the forces he had hastily summoned to his banner. If he was forced to give battle, he resolved to give it on ground he had himself chosen, and, advancing near enough to the coast to check William's ravages, he entrenched himself on the hill of Senlac, a low spur of the Sussex Downs, near Hastings, in a position which covered London, and forced the Norman army to concentrate. With a host subsisting by pillage, to concentrate is to starve, and no alternative was left to William but a decisive victory or ruin.

**The Battle of Senlac,** *Oct.* 14.

Along the higher ground that leads from Hastings the Duke led his men in the dim dawn of an October morning to the mound of Telham. It was from this point that the Normans saw the host of the English gathered thickly behind a rough trench and a stockade on the height of Senlac. Marshy ground covered their right; on the left, the most exposed part of the position, the hus-carls or body-guard of Harold, men in full armour and wielding huge axes, were grouped round the Golden Dragon of Wessex and the standard of the King. The rest of the

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV. THE CONQUEROR. 1042-1066.

ground was covered by the thick masses of half-armed rustics who had flocked at Harold's summons to the fight with the stranger. It was against the centre of this formidable position that William arrayed his Norman knighthood, while the mercenary forces he had gathered in France and Brittany were ordered to attack its flanks. A general charge of the Norman foot opened the battle; in front rode the minstrel Taillefer, tossing his sword in the air and catching it again while he chaunted the song of Roland. He was the first of the host who struck a blow, and he was the first to fall. The charge broke vainly on the stout stockade behind which the English warriors plied axe and javelin with fierce cries of "Out, out," and the repulse of the Norman footmen was followed by the repulse of the Norman horse. Again and again the Duke rallied and led them to the fatal stockade. All the fury of fight that glowed in his Norseman's blood, all the headlong valour that had spurred him over the slopes of Val-ès-dunes, mingled that day with the coolness of head, the dogged perseverance, the inexhaustible faculty of resource which had shone at Mortemer and Varaville. His Breton troops, entangled in the marshy ground on his left, broke in disorder, and a cry arose, as the panic spread through the army, that the Duke was slain. "I live." shouted William, as he tore off his helmet, "and by God's help will conquer yet." Maddened by repulse, the Duke spurred right at the standard; unhorsed, his terrible mace struck down Gyrth, the King's brother, and stretched Leofwine, a second of Godwine's sons, beside him; again dismounted, a blow from his hand hurled to the ground an unmannerly rider who would not lend him his steed. Amidst the roar and tumult of the battle he turned the flight he had arrested into the means of victory. Broken as the stockade was by his desperate onset, the shield-wall of the warriors behind it still held the Normans at bay, when William by a feint of flight drew a part of the English force from their post of vantage. Turning on his disorderly pursuers, the Duke cut them to pieces, broke through the abandoned line, and was master of the central plateau, while French and Bretons made good their ascent on either flank. At three the hill seemed won, at six the fight still raged around the standard, where Harold's hus-carls stood stubbornly at bay on the spot marked afterwards by the high altar of Battle Abbey. An order from the Duke at last brought his archers to the front, and their arrow-flight told heavily on the dense masses crowded around the King. As the sun went down, a shaft pierced Harold's right eye; he fell between the royal ensigns, and the battle closed with a desperate *mêlée* over his corpse. While night covered the flight of the English, the Conqueror pitched his tent on the very spot where his rival had fallen, and "sate down to eat and drink among the dead."

William becomes King.

Securing Romney and Dover, the Duke marched slowly by Canterbury upon London. Faction and intrigue were in reality doing his

Digitized by Google

work for him. Harold's brothers had fallen with the King on the field of Senlac, and there was none of the house of Godwine to contest the crown; while of the old royal line there remained but a single boy, Eadgar the Ætheling, son of the eldest of Eadmund Ironside's children, who had fled, as we have seen, before Cnut's persecution as far as Hungary for shelter. Boy as he was, he was chosen King, but the choice gave little strength to the national cause. The widow of the Confessor surrendered Winchester to the Duke. The bishops gathered at London inclined to submission. The citizens themselves faltered as William, passing by their walls, gave Southwark to the flames. The throne of the boy-king really rested for support on the Earls of Mercia and Northumbria, Eadwine and Morkere; and William, crossing the Thames at Wallingford and marching into Hertfordshire, threatened to cut them off from their earldoms. The masterly movement brought about an instant submission. Eadwine and Morkere retreated hastily home from London, and the city gave way at once. Eadgar himself was at the head of the deputation who came to offer the crown to the Norman Duke; "they bowed to him," says the English annalist, pathetically, "for need." They bowed to the Norman as they had bowed to the Dane, and William accepted the crown in the spirit of Cnut. London indeed was secured by the erection of a fortress which afterwards grew into the Tower, but William desired to reign not as a conqueror but as a lawful king. He received the crown at Westminster from the hands of Archbishop Ealdred, amidst shouts of "Yea, Yea," from his new English subjects. Fines from the greater landowners atoned for a resistance which was now counted as rebellion; but with this exception every measure of the new sovereign indicated his desire of ruling as a successor of Eadward or Ælfred. As yet, indeed, the greater part of England remained quietly aloof from him, and he can hardly be said to have been recognized as king by Northumberland or the greater part of Mercia. But to the east of a line which stretched from Norwich to Dorsetshire his rule was unquestioned, and over this portion he ruled as an English king. His soldiers were kept in strict order. No change was made in law or custom. The privileges of London were recognized by a royal writ which still remains, the most venerable of its muniments, among the city's archives. Peace and order were restored. William even attempted, though in vain, to learn the English tongue, that he might personally administer justice to the suitors in his court. The kingdom seemed so tranquil that only a few months had passed after the battle of Senlac when William, leaving England in charge of his brother, Odo Bishop of Bayeux, and his minister, William Fitz-Osbern, returned for a while to Normandy.

*Christmas* 1066.

Digitized by Google

SEC. V.
THE NORMAN CONQUEST.
1068-1071.

## Section V.—The Norman Conquest, 1068–1071.

[*Authorities.*—The Norman writers as before, Orderic being particularly valuable and detailed. The Chronicle and Florence of Worcester are the primary English authorities (for the so-called "Ingulf of Croyland" is a forgery of the 14th century). Domesday Book is of course indispensable for the Norman settlement; the introduction to it by Sir Henry Ellis gives a brief account of its chief results. Among secondary authorities Simeon of Durham is useful for Northern matters, and William of Malmesbury valuable from his remarkable combination of Norman and English feeling. The Norman Constitution is described at length by Lingard, but best studied in the documents and prefaces of Professor Stubbs' "Documents illustrative, &c." The "Anglia Judaica" of Toovey gives some account of the Jewish colonies. For the history as a whole, see Mr. Freeman's "Norman Conquest," vol. iv.]

**The national revolt.**

It is not to his victory at Senlac, but to the struggle which followed his return from Normandy, that William owes his title of the "Conqueror." During his absence Bishop Odo's tyranny had forced the Kentishmen to seek aid from Count Eustace of Boulogne, while the Welsh princes supported a similar rising against Norman oppression in the west. But as yet the eastern counties trusted and held firmly by the King; Dover was saved, and the discontented fled over the sea to seek refuge in lands as distant as Constantinople, where we find Englishmen composing great part of the Imperial body-guard. A league of the western towns, headed by Exeter, threatened to prove a more serious danger, but William found an English force to suppress it, and it was at the head of an English army that he advanced upon Mercia and the North. His march through Central England reduced Eadwine and Morkere to submission, and a second rising ended in the occupation of York.

England now lay helpless at his feet, but William's position as an English King remained unaffected. He became the Conqueror only in face of a national revolt. The signal for it came from without. Swegen, the King of Denmark, had for two years been preparing to dispute England with the Norman, and on the appearance of his fleet in the Humber the nation rose as one man. Eadgar the Ætheling, with a band of noble exiles who had taken refuge in Scotland, joined the Danes; in the west the men of Devon, Somerset, and
1068. Dorset gathered to the sieges of Exeter and Montacute, while the new Norman castle at Shrewsbury alone bridled the rising along the Welsh border. So ably had the revolt been planned that even William was taken by surprise. The news of the loss of York and of the slaughter of three thousand Normans who formed its garrison reached him as he was hunting in the Forest of Dean, and in a

Digitized by Google

wild outburst of wrath the King swore by "the splendour of God" to avenge himself on Northumbria. But wrath went hand in hand with the coolest statesmanship. William saw clearly that the centre of resistance lay in the Danish fleet, and pushing rapidly to the Humber with a handful of horsemen, he purchased by a heavy bribe its inactivity and withdrawal. Then leaving York to the last, William turned rapidly westward with the troops which gathered round him, and swept the Welsh marshes as far as Shrewsbury. Exeter had been already relieved by William Fitz-Osbern, and the King was free to fulfil his oath of revenge on the North. After a long delay before the flooded waters of the Aire he entered York, and ravaged the whole country as far as the Tees with fire and sword. Town and village were harried and burnt, their inhabitants slain or driven over the Scotch border. The coast was especially wasted, that no hold might remain for any future invasion of the Danes. Harvest, cattle, the very implements of husbandry were so mercilessly destroyed, that the famine which followed is said to have swept off more than a hundred thousand victims, while half a century later the land still lay bare of culture and deserted of men for sixty miles northward of York. The work of vengeance was no sooner over than William led his army back from the Tees to York, and thence to Chester and the West. Never had he shown the grandeur of his character so memorably as in this terrible march. The winter was severe, the roads choked with snowdrifts or broken by torrents; provisions failed, and the army, drenched with rain and forced to consume its horses for food, broke out into open mutiny at the order to advance across the bleak country that separates Yorkshire from the West. The mercenaries from Anjou and Brittany demanded their release from service, and William granted their prayer with scorn. On foot, at the head of the troops which remained faithful, the King forced his way by paths inaccessible to horses, often aiding his men with his own hands to clear the road. The last hopes of the English ceased on his arrival at Chester; the King remained undisputed master of the conquered country, and busied himself in the erection of numerous castles which were henceforth to hold it in subjection. Two years passed quietly ere the last act of the conquest was reached. By the withdrawal of the Dane the hopes of England rested wholly on the aid it looked for from Scotland, where Eadgar the Ætheling had taken refuge, and where his sister Margaret had become the wife of King Malcolm. It was probably Malcolm's instigation which roused Eadwine and Morkere to a renewed revolt, which was at once foiled by the vigilance of the Conqueror. Eadwine fell in an obscure skirmish on the Scotch border, while Morkere found refuge for a time in the marshes of the eastern counties, where a desperate band of patriots had gathered round the outlaw, Hereward. Nowhere

*Last struggle of the English.* 1071.

Digitized by Google

SEC. V. THE NORMAN CONQUEST. 1068-1071.

had William found a more obstinate resistance, but in spite of natural obstacles he drove a causeway two miles long across the fens, and the last hopes of England died in the surrender of Ely. Malcolm alone held out till the Conqueror summoned the whole host of the crown, and crossing the Lowlands and the Forth penetrated into the heart of Scotland. He had reached the Tay when the King's resistance gave way, and Malcolm appeared in the English camp and swore fealty at William's feet.

**William and Feudalism.**

The struggle which ended in the fens of Ely had wholly changed William's position. He no longer held the land merely as elected king, he added to his elective right the right of conquest. The system of government which he originated was, in fact, the result of the double character of his power. It represented neither the purely feudal system of the Continent nor the system of the older English royalty. More truly perhaps it may be said to have represented both. As the successor of Eadward, William retained the judicial and administrative organization of the older English realm. As the conqueror of England, he introduced the military organization of feudalism, so far as was necessary for the secure possession of his conquests. The ground was already prepared for such an organization; we have seen the beginnings of English feudalism in the warriors, the "companions" or "thegns," who were personally attached to the King's war-band, and received estates from the royal domain in reward for their personal service. Under the English kings this feudal distribution of estates had greatly increased, the bulk of the nobles having followed the Royal example and united their tenants to themselves by a similar process of subinfeudation. On the other hand, the pure freeholders, the class which formed the basis of the original English society, had been gradually reduced in number, partly through imitation of the class above them, but still more through the incessant wars and invasions which drove them to seek protectors among the thegns, even at the cost of independence. Feudalism, in fact, was superseding the older freedom in England even before the reign of William, as it had already superseded it in Germany or France. But the tendency was quickened and intensified by the Conquest; the desperate and universal resistance of his English subjects forced William to hold by the sword what the sword had won, and an army strong enough to crush at any moment a national revolt was necessary for the preservation of his throne. Such an army could only be maintained by a vast confiscation of the soil. The failure of the English risings cleared the way for its establishment; the greater part of the higher nobility had fallen in battle or fled into exile, while the lower thegnhood had either forfeited the whole of their lands or redeemed a portion of them by the surrender of the rest. We see the completeness of the confiscation in the vast estates which William was enabled to grant to his more powerful followers. Two

Digitized by Google

hundred manors in Kent, with an equal number elsewhere, rewarded the services of his brother Odo, and grants almost as large fell to the royal ministers, Fitz-Osbern and Montgomery, or to barons like the Mowbrays, the Warrennes, and the Clares. But the poorest soldier of fortune found his part in the spoil. The meanest Norman rose to wealth and power in the new dominion of his Duke. Great or small, however, each estate thus held from the crown was held by its tenant on condition of military service at the royal call; and when the larger holdings were divided by their owners, as was commonly the case, into smaller sub-tenancies, the under-tenants were bound by the same conditions of service to their lord. "Hear, my lord," swore the feudal dependant, as kneeling without arms and bare-headed he placed his hands within those of his superior. "I become liege man of yours for life and limb and earthly regard, and I will keep faith and loyalty to you for life and death, God help me." The kiss of his lord invested him with land or "fief" to descend to him and his heirs for ever. A whole army was by this means camped upon the soil, and the King's summons could at any moment gather sixty thousand knights to the royal standard.

**The English baronage.**

Such a force, however, effective as it was against the conquered, was hardly less formidable to the crown itself. William found himself fronted in his new realm by the feudal baronage whom he had so hardly subdued to his will in Normandy, nobles impatient of law, and aiming at an hereditary military and judicial power within their own manors independent of the King. The genius of the Conqueror is shown in his quick discernment of this danger, and in the skill with which he met it. He availed himself of the old legal constitution of the country to hold justice firmly in his own hands. He retained the local courts of the hundred and the shire, where every freeman had a place, while he subjected all to the jurisdiction of the King's court, which towards the close of the earlier English monarchy had assumed the right of hearing appeals and of calling up cases from any quarter to its bar. The authority of the crown was maintained by the abolition of the great earldoms which had overshadowed it, those of Wessex, Mercia, and Northumberland, and by the royal nomination of sheriffs for the government of the shires. The estates of the great nobles, large as they were, were scattered over the country in a way which made union between the landowners, or the hereditary attachment of great masses of vassals to a separate lord, equally impossible. By a usage peculiar to England, each sub-tenant, in addition to his oath of fealty to his lord, swore fealty directly to the crown. The feudal obligations, too, the rights and dues owing from each estate to the King, were enforced with remarkable strictness. Each tenant was bound to appear if needful thrice a year at the royal court, to pay a heavy fine or rent on succession to his estate, to contribute an "aid" in money



Digitized by Google

SEC. V. THE NORMAN CONQUEST. 1068-1071.

in case of the King's capture in war, or the knighthood of the King's eldest son, or the marriage of his eldest daughter. An heir who was still a minor passed into the crown's wardship, and all profit from his estate went for the time to the King. If the estate devolved upon an heiress, her hand was at the King's disposal, and was generally sold to the highest bidder. All manors, too, were burthened with their own "customs," or special dues to the crown, and it was for the purpose of ascertaining and recording these that William sent into each county the commissioners whose inquiries are preserved in Domesday Book. A jury empanelled in each hundred declared on oath the extent and nature of each estate, the names, numbers, condition of its inhabitants, its value before and after the Conquest, and the sums due from it to the crown.

**The Church of the Normans.**

William found another check on the aggressive spirit of the feudal baronage in his organization of the Church. One of his earliest acts was to summon Lanfranc from Normandy to aid him in its reform; and the deposition of Stigand, which raised Lanfranc to the see of Canterbury, was followed by the removal of most of the English prelates and abbots, and by the appointment of Norman ecclesiastics in their place. The synods of the new Archbishop did much to restore discipline, and William's own efforts were no doubt directed by a real desire for the religious improvement of his realm. "In choosing abbots and bishops," says a contemporary, "he considered not so much men's riches or power as their holiness and wisdom. He called together bishops and abbots and other wise counsellors in any vacancy, and by their advice inquired very carefully who was the best and wisest man, as well in divine things as in worldly, to rule the church of God." But honest as they were, the King's reforms tended directly to the increase of the royal power. The new bishops and abbots were cut off by their foreign origin from the flocks they ruled, while their popular influence was lessened by the removal of ecclesiastical cases from the hundred court, where till now the bishop had sat side by side with the civil magistrate, to the separate court of the bishop himself. Pregnant as this measure was with future trouble to the crown, it must for the time have furthered the isolation of the prelates, and fixed them into a position of dependence on the King, which was enhanced by the strictness with which William enforced his supremacy over the Church. Homage was exacted from bishop as from baron. No excommunication could be issued without the King's licence. No synod could legislate without his previous assent and subsequent confirmation of its decrees. No papal letters could be received within the realm save by his permission. William was indeed the one ruler of his time who dared firmly to repudiate the claims which were now beginning to be put forward by the court of Rome. When Gregory VII. called on him to do fealty for his realm, the King sternly refused to admit the claim.

Digitized by Google

"Fealty I have never willed to do, nor do I will to do it now. I have never promised it, nor do I find that my predecessors did it to yours."

But the greatest safeguard of the crown lay in the wealth and personal power of the kings. Extensive as had been his grants to noble and soldier, William remained the greatest landowner in his realm. His rigid exaction of feudal dues added wealth to the great Hoard at Winchester, which had been begun by the spoil of the conquered. But William found a more ready source of revenue in the settlement of the Jewish traders, who followed him from Normandy, and who were enabled by the royal protection to establish themselves in separate quarters or "Jewries" of the chief towns of England. The Jew had no right or citizenship in the land; the Jewry in which he lived was, like the King's forest, exempt from the common law. He was simply the King's chattel, and his life and goods were absolutely at the King's mercy. But he was too valuable a possession to be lightly thrown away. A royal justiciary secured law to the Jewish merchant, who had no standing-ground in the local courts; his bonds were deposited for safety in a chamber of the royal palace at Westminster, which from their Hebrew name of "starrs" gained the title of the Star Chamber; he was protected against the popular hatred in the free exercise of his religion, and allowed to erect synagogues and to direct his own ecclesiastical affairs by means of a chief Rabbi. No measures could have been more beneficial to the kingdom at large. The Jew was the only capitalist in Europe, and heavy as was the usury he exacted, his loans gave an impulse to industry such as England had never felt before. The century which followed the Conquest witnessed an outburst of architectural energy which covered the land with castles and cathedrals; but castle and cathedral alike owed their existence to the loans of the Jew. His own example gave a new direction to domestic architecture. The buildings which, as at Lincoln and S. Edmondsbury, still retain their title of "Jews' Houses," were almost the first houses of stone which superseded the mere hovels of the English burghers. Nor was the influence of the Jews simply industrial. Through their connection with the Jewish schools in Spain and the East they opened a way for the revival of physical science. A Jewish medical school seems to have existed at Oxford; Adelard of Bath brought back a knowledge of mathematics from Cordova; Roger Bacon himself studied under the English Rabbis. But to the kings the Jew was simply an engine of finance. The wealth which his industry accumulated was wrung from him whenever the King had need, and torture and imprisonment were resorted to if milder entreaties failed. It was the wealth of the Jew that filled the royal exchequer at the outbreak of war or of revolt. It was in the Hebrew coffers that the Norman kings found strength to hold their baronage at bay.

**Settlement of the Jews.**



Digitized by Google

SEC. VI.

THE ENGLISH REVIVAL.

1071-1127.

## Section VI.—The English Revival, 1071-1127.

[*Authorities.*—Orderic and the English chroniclers, as before. Eadmer, a monk of Canterbury, in his "Historia Novorum" and his "Life of Anselm," is the chief source of information for the reign of William the Second. William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon are both contemporary authorities during that of Henry the First: the latter remains a brief but accurate annalist; the former is the leader of a new historic school, who treat English events as part of the history of the world, and emulate classic models by a more philosophical arrangement of their materials. See for them the opening section of the next chapter. On the early history of our towns the reader may gain something from Mr. Thompson's "English Municipal History" (London, 1857); more from the "Charter Rolls" (published by the Record Commissioners); for S. Edmundsbury see "Chronicle of Jocelyn de Brakelond" (Camden Society). The records of the Cistercian Abbeys of Yorkshire in "Dugdale's Monasticon," illustrate the religious revival. Henry's administration is admirably explained for the first time by Professor Stubbs ("Documents illustrative," &c.).]

**William and the Barons.**

The Conquest was hardly over when the struggle between the baronage and the crown began. The wisdom of William's policy in the destruction of the great earldoms which had overshadowed the throne, was shown in an attempt at their restoration made by Roger, the son of his minister William Fitz-Osbern, and the Breton, Ralf de Guader, whom the King had rewarded for his services at Senlac with

1075. the earldom of Norfolk. The rising was quickly suppressed, Roger thrown into prison and Ralf driven over sea; but the intrigues of the baronage soon found another leader in William's half-brother, the Bishop of Bayeux. Under pretence of aspiring by arms to the papacy, Bishop Odo collected money and men, but the treasure was at once seized by the royal officers, and the Bishop arrested in the midst of the Court. Even at the King's bidding no officer would venture to seize on a prelate of the Church; it was with his own hands that William was forced to effect his arrest. "I arrest not the Bishop, but the Earl of Kent," laughed the Conqueror, and Odo remained a prisoner till his death. It was in fact this vigorous personality of William which proved the chief safeguard of his throne. "Stark he was," says the English chronicler, "to men that withstood him. So harsh and cruel was he that none dared resist his will. Earls that did aught against his bidding he cast into bonds, bishops he stripped of their bishopricks, abbots of their abbacies. He spared not his own brother; first he was in the land, but the King cast him into bondage. If a man would live and hold his lands, need it were that he followed the King's will." But stern as his rule was, it gave peace to the land. Even amidst the sufferings which necessarily sprang from the circum-

Digitized by Google

stances of the Conquest itself, from the erection of castles, or the enclosure of forests, or the exactions which built up the great Hoard at Winchester, Englishmen were unable to forget "the good peace he made in the land, so that a man might fare over his realm with a bosom full of gold." Strange touches of a humanity far in advance of his age contrasted with the general temper of his government. One of the strongest traits in his character was his aversion to shed blood by process of law; he formally abolished the punishment of death, and only a single execution stains the annals of his reign. An edict yet more honourable to him put an end to the slave trade which had till then been carried on at the port of Bristol. If he was stark to baron or rebel he was "mild to them that loved God."

**The English and their Kings.** 1085.

In power as in renown the Conqueror towered high above his predecessors on the throne. The fear of the Danes, which had so long hung like a thunder-cloud over England, passed away before the host which William gathered to meet a great armament assembled by King Canute. A mutiny dispersed the Danish fleet, and the murder of its King removed all peril from the North. Scotland, already humbled by William's invasion, was bridled by the erection of a strong fortress at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and after penetrating with his army to the heart of Wales, the King commenced its systematic reduction by settling barons along its frontier with licence to conquer the land to their own profit. His closing years were disturbed by a rebellion of his son Robert and a quarrel with France; as he rode down the steep street of Mantes, which he had given to the flames, his horse stumbled among the embers, and William, flung heavily against his saddle, was borne home to Rouen to die. The sound of the minster bell woke him at dawn as he lay in the convent of St. Gervais, overlooking the city—it was the hour of prime—and stretching out his hands in prayer the Conqueror passed quietly away. With him passed the terror which had held the baronage in awe, while the severance of his dominions roused their hopes of successful resistance to the stern rule beneath which they had bowed. William had bequeathed Normandy to his eldest son Robert; William, his second son, had hastened with his father's ring to England, where the influence of Lanfranc at once secured him the crown. The baronage seized the opportunity to rise in arms under pretext of supporting the claims of Robert, whose weakness of character gave full scope for the growth of feudal independence, and Bishop Odo placed himself at the head of the revolt. The new King was thrown almost wholly on the loyalty of his English subjects, but their hatred of Norman lawlessness rallied them to his standard; Bishop Wulfstan of Worcester, the one surviving Bishop of English blood, defeated the insurgents in the West, and the King, summoning the freemen of country and town to his

*Death of the Conqueror.* 1087.

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE ENGLISH REVIVAL. 1071-1127.

host under pain of being branded as "nithing" or worthless, advanced with a large force against Rochester, where the barons were concentrated. A plague which broke out among the garrison forced them to capitulate; and as the prisoners passed through the royal army, cries of "gallows and cord" burst from the English ranks. At a later period of his reign a vast conspiracy was organized to place Stephen of Albemarle, a distant connection of the royal house, upon the throne, but the capture of Robert Mowbray, the Earl of Northumberland, who had placed himself at its head, and the imprisonment and exile of his fellow-conspirators, again crushed the hopes of the baronage.

**The Red King and the Church.**

While the spirit of national patriotism rose to life again in this struggle of the crown against the baronage, the boldness of a single ecclesiastic revived a national opposition to the mere administrative despotism which had prevailed since the fatal day of Senlac. If William the Red inherited much of his father's energy as well as his policy towards the conquered English, he inherited none of his moral grandeur. His profligacy and extravagance soon exhausted the royal Hoard, and the death of Lanfranc left him free to fill it at the expense of the Church. During the vacancy of a see or abbey its revenues went to the royal treasury, and so steadily did William refuse to appoint successors to the prelates whom death removed, that at the close of his reign one archbishopric, four bishoprics, and eleven abbeys were found to be without pastors. The see of Canterbury itself remained vacant till a dangerous illness frightened the King into the promotion of Anselm, who happened at the time to be in England on the business of his house. The Abbot of Bec was dragged to the royal couch and the cross forced into his hands, but William had no sooner recovered from his sickness than he found himself face to face with an opponent whose meek and loving temper rose into firmness and grandeur when it fronted the tyranny of the King. The Conquest, as we have seen, had robbed the Church of all moral power as the representative of the higher national interests against a brutal despotism by placing it in a position of mere dependence on the crown; and, though the struggle between William and the Archbishop turned for the most part on points which have no direct bearing on our history, the boldness of Anselm's attitude not only broke the tradition of ecclesiastical servitude, but infused through the nation at large a new spirit of independence. The real character of the contest appears in the Primate's answer, when his remonstrances against the lawless exactions from the Church were met by a demand for a present on his own promotion, and his first offer of five hundred pounds was contemptuously refused. "Treat me as a free man," Anselm replied, "and I devote myself and all that I have to your service, but if you treat me as a slave you shall have neither me nor mine." A burst of the Red King's

*Anselm Archbishop.*

Digitized by Google

fury drove the Archbishop from court, and he finally decided to quit the country, but his example had not been lost, and the close of William's reign found a new spirit of freedom in England with which the greatest of the Conqueror's sons was glad to make terms.

As a soldier the Red King was little inferior to his father. Normandy had been sold to him by his brother Robert in exchange for a sum which enabled the Duke to march in the first Crusade for the delivery of the Holy Land, and a rebellion at Le Mans was subdued by the fierce energy with which William flung himself, at the news of it, into the first boat he found, and crossed the Channel in face of a storm. "Kings never drown," he replied, contemptuously, to the remonstrances of his followers. Homage was again wrested from Malcolm by a march to the Firth of Forth, and the subsequent death of the King threw Scotland into a disorder which enabled an army under Eadgar Ætheling to establish Edward, the son of Margaret, as an English feudatory on the throne. In Wales William was less triumphant, and the terrible losses inflicted on the heavy Norman cavalry in the fastnesses of Snowdon forced him to fall back on the slower but wiser policy of the Conqueror. Triumph and defeat alike ended in a strange and tragical close; the Red King was found dead by peasants in a glade of the New Forest, with the arrow either of a hunter or an assassin in his breast. Robert was still on his return from the Holy Land, where his bravery had redeemed much of his earlier ill-fame, and the English crown was at once seized by his younger brother Henry, in spite of the opposition of the baronage, who clung to the Duke of Normandy and the union of their estates on both sides the Channel under a single ruler. Their attitude threw Henry, as it had thrown Rufus, on the support of the English, and the two great measures which followed his coronation mark the new relation which was thus brought about between the people and their King. Henry's Charter is important, not merely as the direct precedent for the Great Charter of John, but as the first limitation which had been imposed on the despotism established by the Conquest. The "evil customs" by which the Red King had enslaved and plundered the Church were explicitly renounced in it, the unlimited demands made by both the Conqueror and his son on the baronage exchanged for customary fees, while the rights of the people itself, though recognized more vaguely, were not forgotten. The barons were held to do justice to their under-tenants and to renounce tyrannical exactions from them, the King promising to restore order and the "law of Eadward," the old constitution of the realm, with the changes which his father had introduced. His marriage gave a significance to these promises which the meanest English peasant could understand. Edith, or Matilda, was the daughter of King Malcolm of Scotland and of Margaret, the sister of Eadgar Ætheling. She had been brought up in the nunnery of Romsey

*Death of the Red King.* 1100.

*Henry's Charter.*

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE ENGLISH REVIVAL. 1071-1127.

by its abbess, her aunt Christina, and the veil which she had taken there formed an obstacle to her union with the King, which was only removed by the wisdom of Anselm. The Archbishop's recall had been one of Henry's first acts after his accession, and Matilda appeared before his court to tell her tale in words of passionate earnestness. She had been veiled in her childhood, she asserted, only to save her from the insults of the rude soldiery who infested the land, had flung the veil from her again and again, and had yielded at last to the unwomanly taunts, the actual blows of her aunt. "As often as I stood in her presence," the girl pleaded passionately to the saintly Primate, "I wore the veil, trembling as I wore it with indignation and grief. But as soon as I could get out of her sight I used to snatch it from my head, fling it on the ground, and trample it under foot. That was the way, and none other, in which I was veiled." Anselm at once declared her free from conventual bonds, and the shout of the English multitude when he set the crown on Matilda's brow drowned the murmur of Churchman or of baron. The taunts of the Norman nobles, who nicknamed the King and his spouse "Farmer Godric and his cummer Godgifu," were lost in the joy of the people at large. For the first time since the Conquest, an English sovereign sat on the English throne. The blood of Cerdic and Ælfred was to blend itself with that of Hrolf and the Conqueror. It was impossible that the two peoples should henceforth be severed from one another, and their fusion proceeded so rapidly that the name of Norman had passed away at the accession of Henry the Second, and the descendants of the victors at Senlac boasted themselves to be Englishmen.

*Henry's marriage.*

We can dimly trace the progress of this blending of the two races together in the case of the burgher population in the towns.

**The English towns.**

One immediate result of the Conquest had been a great immigration into England from the Continent. A peaceful invasion of the industrial and trading classes of Normandy followed quick on the conquest of the Norman soldiery. Every Norman noble as he quartered himself upon English lands, every Norman abbot as he entered his English cloister, gathered French artists or French domestics around his new castle or his new church. Around the Abbey of Battle, for instance, which William had founded on the site of his great victory, "Gilbert the Foreigner, Gilbert the Weaver, Benet the Steward, Hugh the Secretary, Baldwin the Tailor," mixed with the English tenantry. More especially was this the case with the capital. Long before the landing of William the Normans had had mercantile establishments in London. Their settlement would naturally have remained a mere trading colony, but London had no sooner submitted to the Conqueror than "many of the citizens of Rouen and Caen passed over thither, preferring to be dwellers in this city, inasmuch as it was fitter for their trading, and better stored with the merchandise

Digitized by Google

in which they were wont to traffic." At Norwich and elsewhere the French colony isolated itself in a separate French town, side by side with the English borough. In London it seems to have taken at once the position of a governing class. The name of Gilbert Beket, the father of the famous Archbishop, is one of the few that remain to us of the Portreeves of London, the predecessors of its Mayors; he held in Stephen's time a large property in houses within the walls, and a proof of his civic importance was preserved in the annual visit of each newly-elected chief magistrate to his tomb in the little chapel which he had founded in the churchyard of S. Paul's. Yet Gilbert was one of the Norman strangers who followed in the wake of the Conqueror; he was by birth a burgher of Rouen, as his wife was of a burgher family from Caen. It was partly to this infusion of foreign blood, partly no doubt to the long internal peace and order secured by the Norman rule, that the English towns owed the wealth and importance to which they attained during the reign of Henry the First. In the silent growth and elevation of the English people the boroughs led the way: unnoticed and despised by prelate and noble, they had alone preserved the full tradition of Teutonic liberty. The rights of self-government, of free speech in free meeting, of equal justice by one's equals, were brought safely across the ages of Norman tyranny by the traders and shopkeepers of the towns. In the quiet, quaintly named streets, in town-mead, and market-place, in the lord's mill beside the stream, in the bell that swung out its summons to the crowded borough-mote, in the jealousies of craftsmen and guilds, lay the real life of Englishmen, the life of their home and trade, their ceaseless, sober struggle with oppression, their steady, unwearied battle for self-government. It is difficult to trace the steps by which borough after borough won its freedom. The bulk of them were situated in the royal demesne, and, like other tenants, their customary rents were collected and justice administered by a royal officer. Amongst such towns London stood chief, and the charter which Henry granted it became the model for the rest. The King yielded the citizens the right of justice; every townsman could claim to be tried by his fellow-townsmen in the town-courts or hustings, whose sessions took place every week. They were subject only to the old English trial by oath, and exempt from the trial by battle, which the Normans had introduced. Their trade was protected from toll or exaction over the length and breadth of the land. The King however still nominated, in London as elsewhere, the Portreeve, or magistrate of the town, nor were the citizens as yet united together in a commune or corporation; but an imperfect civic organization existed in the "wards" or quarters of the town, each governed by its own alderman, and in the "guilds" or voluntary associations of merchants or traders which ensured order and mutual protection for their members. Loose, too, as these bonds may seem,

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE ENGLISH REVIVAL. 1071-1127.

they were drawn firmly together by the older English traditions of freedom which the towns preserved. In London, for instance, the burgesses gathered in town-mote when the bell swung out from S. Paul's to deliberate freely on their own affairs under the presidency of their aldermen. Here, too, they mustered in arms, if danger threatened the city, and delivered the city-banner to their captain, the Norman baron Fitz-Walter, to lead them against the enemy. Few boroughs had as yet attained to power such as this, but charter after charter during Henry's reign raised the townsmen of boroughs from mere traders, wholly at the mercy of their lord, into customary tenants, who had purchased their freedom by a fixed rent, regulated their own trade, and enjoyed exemption from all but their own justice.

**S. Edmundsbury.**

The advance of towns which had grown up not on the royal domain but around abbey or castle was slower and more difficult. The story of S. Edmundsbury shows how gradual was the transition from pure serfage to an imperfect freedom. Much that had been plough-land in the time of the Confessor was covered with houses under the Norman rule. The building of the great abbey-church drew its craftsmen and masons to mingle with the ploughmen and reapers of the Abbot's domain. The troubles of the time helped here as elsewhere the progress of the town; serfs, fugitives from justice or their lord, the trader, the Jew, naturally sought shelter under the strong hand of S. Edmund. But the settlers were wholly at the Abbot's mercy. Not a settler but was bound to pay his pence to the Abbot's treasury, to plough a rood of his land, to reap in his harvest-field, to fold his sheep in the Abbey folds, to help bring the annual catch of eels from the Abbey waters. Within the four crosses that bounded the Abbot's domain, land and water were his; the cattle of the townsmen paid for their pasture on the common; if the fullers refused the loan of their cloth, the cellarer would refuse the use of the stream, and seize their looms wherever he found them. No toll might be levied of purchasers from the Abbey farms, and customers had to wait before shop and stall till the buyers of the Abbot had had the pick of the market. There was little chance of redress, for if burghers complained in folk-mote, it was before the Abbot's officers that its meeting was held; if they appealed to the alderman, he was the Abbot's nominee, and received the horn, the symbol of his office, at the Abbot's hands. Like all the greater revolutions of society, the advance from this mere serfage was a silent one; indeed its more galling instances of oppression seem to have slipped unconsciously away. Some, like the eel-fishing, were commuted for an easy rent; others, like the slavery of the fullers and the toll of flax, simply disappeared. By usage, by omission, by downright forgetfulness, here by a little struggle, there by a present to a needy abbot, the town won freedom. But progress was not always unconscious, and one incident in the history of S. Edmundsbury is

Digitized by Google

remarkable, not merely as indicating the advance of law, but yet more as marking the part which a new moral sense of man's right to equal justice was to play in the general advance of the realm. Rude as the borough was, it had preserved its right of meeting in full assembly of the townsmen for government and law. Justice was administered in presence of the burgesses, and the accused acquitted or condemned by the oath of his neighbours. Without the borough bounds, however, the system of the Norman judicature prevailed, and the rural tenants who did suit and service at the Cellarer's court were subject to the decision of the trial by battle. The execution of a farmer named Kebel, who was subject to this feudal jurisdiction, brought the two systems into vivid contrast. He seems to have been guiltless of the crime laid to his charge, but the duel went against him, and he was hung just without the gates. The taunts of the townsmen woke his fellow-farmers to a sense of wrong. "Had Kebel been a dweller within the borough," said the burgesses, "he would have got his acquittal from the oaths of his neighbours, as our liberty is;" and even the monks were moved to a decision that their tenants should enjoy equal liberty and justice with the townsmen. The franchise of the town was extended to the rural possessions of the Abbey without it, the farmers "came to the toll-house, were written in the alderman's roll, and paid the town-penny."

**The religious revival.**

The moral revolution which events like this indicate was backed by a religious revival which forms a marked feature in the reign of Henry the First. Pious, learned, and energetic as the bishops of William's appointment had been, they were not Englishmen. Till Beket's time no Englishmen occupied the throne of Canterbury; till Jocelyn, in the reign of John, no Englishmen occupied the see of Wells. In language, in manner, in sympathy, the higher clergy were thus completely severed from the lower priesthood and the people, and the whole influence of the Church, constitutional as well as religious, was for the moment paralysed. Lanfranc indeed exercised a great personal influence over William, but Anselm stood alone against Rufus, and no voice of ecclesiastical freedom broke the simoniac silence of the reign of Henry the First. But at the close of the latter reign and throughout that of Stephen, the people, left thus without shepherds, was stirred by the first of those great religious movements which England was to experience afterwards in the preaching of the Friars, the Lollardism of Wyclif, the Reformation, the Puritan enthusiasm, and the mission work of the Wesleys. Everywhere in town and country men banded themselves together for prayer, hermits flocked to the woods, noble and churl welcomed the austere Cistercians, a reformed outshoot of the Benedictine order, as they spread over the moors and forests of the North. A new spirit of devotion woke the slumber of the religious houses, and penetrated alike

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE ENGLISH REVIVAL. 1071-1127.

to the home of the noble Walter d'Espec at Rievaulx, or of the trader Gilbert Beket in Cheapside. London took its full share in the great revival. The city was proud of its religion, its thirteen conventual and more than a hundred parochial churches. The new impulse changed, in fact, its very aspect. In the midst of the city Bishop Richard busied himself with the vast cathedral which Bishop Maurice had begun; barges came up the river with stone from Caen for the great arches that moved the popular wonder, while street and lane were being levelled to make space for the famous Churchyard of S. Paul's. Rahere, the King's minstrel, raised the priory of S. Bartholomew beside Smithfield. Alfune built S. Giles's at Cripplegate. The old English Cnihtena-gild surrendered their soke of Aldgate as a site for the new priory of the Holy Trinity. The tale of this house paints admirably the temper of the citizens at this time. Its founder, Prior Norman, had built church and cloister and bought books and vestments in so liberal a fashion that at last no money remained to buy bread. The canons were at their last gasp when many of the city folk, looking into the refectory as they paced round the cloister in their usual Sunday procession, saw the tables laid but not a single loaf on them. "Here is a fine set-out," cried the citizens, "but where is the bread to come from?" The women present vowed to bring a loaf every Sunday, and there was soon bread enough and to spare for the priory and its guests. We see the strength of the new movement in the new class of ecclesiastics that it forces on the stage; men like Anselm or John of Salisbury, or the two great prelates who followed one another after Henry's death in the see of Canterbury, Theobald and Thomas derived whatever might they possessed from sheer holiness of life or unselfishness of aim. The revival left its stamp on the fabric of the constitution itself: the paralysis of the Church ceased as the new impulse bound the prelacy and people together, and its action, when at the end of Henry's reign it started into a power strong enough to save England from anarchy, has been felt in our history ever since.

**Henry's Administration.**

From this revival of English feeling Henry himself stood jealously aloof; but the enthusiasm which his marriage had excited enabled him to defy the claims of his brother and the disaffection of his nobles. Robert landed like his father at Pevensey, to find himself face to face with an English army which Anselm's summons had gathered round the King; and his retreat left Henry free to deal sternly with the rebel barons. Robert of Belesme, the son of Roger of Montgomery, was now their chief; but 60,000 English footmen followed the King through the rough passes which led to Shrewsbury, and an early surrender alone saved Robert's life. Master of his own realm and enriched by the confiscated lands of the revolted baronage, Henry crossed into Normandy, where the misgovernment of Robert had alienated the clergy and trades, and where the outrages of the Norman nobles

1115.

Digitized by Google

forced the more peaceful classes to call the King to their aid. On the field of Tenchebray his forces met those of the Duke, and a decisive English victory on Norman soil avenged the shame of Hastings. The conquered duchy became an appanage of the English crown, and Henry's energies were frittered away through a quarter of a century in crushing its revolts, the hostility of the French, and the efforts of his nephew, William, the son of Robert, to regain the crown which his father had lost at Tenchebray. In England, however, all was peace. The vigorous administration of Henry the First completed in fullest detail the system of government which the Conqueror had sketched. The vast estates which had fallen to the crown through forfeiture and revolt were granted out to new men dependent on royal favour; while the towns were raised into a counterbalancing force to the feudalism of the country by the grant of charters and the foundation of trade-guilds. A new organization of justice and finance bound the kingdom together under the royal administration. The Clerks of the Royal Chapel were formed into a body of secretaries or royal ministers, whose head bore the title of Chancellor. Above them stood the Justiciar, or Lieutenant-General of the kingdom, who in the frequent absence of the King acted as Regent of the realm, and whose staff, selected from the barons connected with the royal household, were formed into a Supreme Court of Appeal. The King's Court, as this was called, permanently represented the whole court of royal vassals, which had hitherto been summoned thrice in the year. As the royal council, it revised and registered laws, and its "counsel and consent," though merely formal, preserved the principle of the older popular legislation. As a court of justice it formed the highest court of appeal: it could call up any suit from a lower tribunal on the application of a suitor, while the union of several sheriffdoms under one of its members connected it closely with the local courts. As a financial body, its chief work lay in the assessment and collection of the revenue. In this capacity it took the name of the Court of Exchequer, from the chequered table, much like a chess-board, at which it sat, and on which accounts were rendered. In their financial capacity its justices became "barons of the Exchequer." Twice every year the sheriff of each county appeared before these barons and rendered the sum of the fixed rent from royal domains, the Danegeld or tax, the fines of the local courts, the feudal aids from the baronial estates, which formed the chief part of the royal revenue. Local disputes respecting these payments or the assessment of the town-rent were settled by a detachment of barons from the court who made the circuit of the shires, and whose fiscal visitations led to the judicial visitations, the "judges' circuits," which still form so marked a feature in our legal system.

From this work of internal reform Henry's attention was called suddenly by one terrible loss to the question of the succession to the

**The White Ship.**

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE ENGLISH REVIVAL. 1071-1127.

throne. His son William "the Ætheling," as the English fondly styled the child of their own Matilda, had with a crowd of nobles accompanied the King on his return from Normandy; but the White Ship in which he had embarked lingered behind the rest of the royal fleet, while the young nobles, excited with wine, hung over the ship's side and chased away with taunts the priest who came to give the customary benediction. At last the guards of the King's treasure pressed the vessel's departure, and, driven by the arms of fifty rowers, it swept swiftly out to sea. All at once the ship's side struck on a rock at the mouth of the harbour, and in an instant it sank beneath the waves. One terrible cry, ringing through the stillness of the night, was heard by the royal fleet, but it was not till the morning that the fatal news reached the King. He fell unconscious to the ground, and rose never to smile again. Henry had no other son, and the whole circle of his foreign foes closed round him the more fiercely that the son of Robert was now his natural heir. The King hated William, while he loved Maud, the daughter who still remained to him, who had been married to the Emperor Henry the Fifth, and whose husband's death now restored her to her father. He recognized her as his heir, though the succession of a woman seemed strange to the feudal baronage; nobles and priests were forced to swear allegiance to her as their future mistress, and Henry affianced her to the son of the one foe he really feared, the Count of Anjou.

*Wreck of the White Ship.* 1120.

### Section VII.—England and Anjou, 870-1154.

[*Authorities.*—The chief documents for Angevin history have been collected in the "Chroniques d'Anjou," published by the Historical Society of France (Paris, 1856). The best known of these is the "Gesta Comitum," a compilation of the twelfth century (given also by D'Achery, "Spicilegium," 4to. vol. x. p. 534), in which the earlier romantic traditions are simply dressed up into historical shape by copious quotations from the French historians. Save for the reigns of Geoffry Martel, and Fulc of Jerusalem, it is nearly valueless. The short autobiography of Fulc Rechin is the most authentic memorial of the earlier Angevin history; and much can be gleaned from the verbose life of Geoffry the Handsome by John of Marmoutiers. For England, Orderic and the Chronicle die out in the midst of Stephen's reign; here, too, end William of Malmesbury, Huntingdon, the "Gesta Stephani," a record in great detail by one of Stephen's clerks, and the Hexham Chroniclers, who are most valuable for its opening (published by Mr. Raine for the Surtees Society). The blank in our historical literature extends over the first years of Henry the Second. The lives and letters of Beket have been industriously collected—in a disorderly way—and published by Dr. Giles.]

**The Counts of Anjou.**

To understand the history of England under its Angevin rulers, we must first know something of the Angevins themselves. The character and the policy of Henry the Second and his sons were as much a

Digitized by Google

heritage of their race as the broad lands of Anjou. The fortunes of England were being slowly wrought out in every incident of the history of the Counts, as the descendants of a Breton woodman became masters not of Anjou only, but of Touraine, Maine, and Poitou, of Gascony and Auvergne, of Acquitaine and Normandy, and sovereigns at last of the great realm which Normandy had won. The legend of the father of their races carries us back to the times of our own Ælfred, when the Danes were ravaging along Loire as they ravaged along Thames. In the heart of the Breton border, in the debateable land between France and Brittany, dwelt Tortulf the Forester, half-brigand, half-hunter as the gloomy days went, living in free outlaw-fashion in the woods about Rennes. Tortulf had learned in his rough forest school "how to strike the foe, to sleep on the bare ground, to bear hunger and toil, summer's heat and winter's frost, how to fear nothing save ill-fame." Following King Charles the Bald in his struggle with the Danes, the woodman won broad lands along Loire, 870.
and his son Ingelger, who had swept the Northmen from Touraine and the land to the west, which they had burnt and wasted into a vast solitude, became the first Count of Anjou. The second, Fulc the Red, 888.
attached himself to the Dukes of France, who were now drawing nearer to the throne, and received from them in guerdon the western portion of Anjou which lay across the Mayenne. The story of his son is a story of peace, breaking like a quiet idyll the war-storms of his house. Alone of his race Fulc the Good waged no wars: his delight was to sit in the choir of Tours and to be called "Canon." One Martinmas eve Fulc was singing there in clerkly guise, when the 938.
King, Lewis d'Outremer, entered the church. "He sings like a priest," laughed the King, as his nobles pointed mockingly to the figure of the Count-Canon; but Fulc was ready with his reply. "Know, my lord," wrote the Count of Anjou, "that a King unlearned is a crowned ass." Fulc was in fact no priest, but a busy ruler, governing, enforcing peace, and carrying justice to every corner of the wasted land. To him alone of his race men gave the title of "the Good."

**Fulc the Black.** 987-1040.

Hampered by revolt, himself in character little more than a bold, dashing soldier, Fulc's son, Geoffry Grey-gown, sank almost into a vassal of his powerful neighbours, the Counts of Blois and Champagne. The vassalage was roughly shaken off by his successor. Fulc Nerra, Fulc the Black, is the greatest of the Angevins, the first in whom we can trace that marked type of character which their house was to preserve with a fatal constancy through two hundred years. He was without natural affection. In his youth he burnt a wife at the stake, and legend told how he led her to her doom decked out in his gayest attire. In his old age he waged his bitterest war against his son, and exacted from him when vanquished a humiliation which men reserved for the deadliest of their foes. "You are conquered, you are con-

Digitized by Google

SEC. VII.
ENGLAND AND ANJOU.
870-1154.

quered!" shouted the old man in fierce exultation, as Geoffry, bridled and saddled like a beast of burden, crawled for pardon to his father's feet. In Fulc first appeared the low type of superstition which startled even superstitious ages in the early Plantagenets, a superstition based simply on terror and stript of all poetry or belief. Robber as he was of Church lands, and contemptuous of ecclesiastical censures, the fear of the end of the world drove Fulc to the Holy Sepulchre. Barefoot and with the strokes of the scourge falling heavily on his shoulders, the Count had himself dragged by a halter through the streets of Jerusalem, and courted the doom of martyrdom by his wild outcries of penitence. He rewarded the fidelity of Herbert of Le Mans, whose aid saved him from utter ruin, by entrapping him into captivity and robbing him of his lands. He secured the terrified friendship of the French king by despatching twelve assassins to cut down before his eyes the minister who had troubled it. Familiar as the age was with treason and rapine and blood, it recoiled from the cool cynicism of his crimes, and believed the wrath of Heaven to have been revealed against the union of the worst forms of evil in Fulc the Black. But neither the wrath of Heaven nor the curses of men broke with a single mishap the fifty years of his success.

**The greatness of Anjou.**

At his accession Anjou was the least important of the greater provinces of France. At his death it stood, if not in extent, at least in real power, first among them all. Cool-headed, clear-sighted, quick to resolve, quicker to strike, Fulc's career was one long series of victories over all his rivals. He was a consummate general, and he had the gift of personal bravery, which was denied to some of his greatest descendants. There was a moment in the first of his battles when the day seemed lost for Anjou; a feigned retreat of the Bretons had drawn the Anjevin horsemen into a line of hidden pitfalls, and the Count himself was flung heavily to the ground. Dragged from the medley of men and horses, he swept down almost singly on the foe "as a storm-wind" (so rang the pæan of the Angevins) "sweeps down on the thick corn-rows," and the field was won. To these qualities of the warrior he added a power of political organization, a capacity for far-reaching combinations, a faculty of statesmanship, which became the heritage of the Angevins, and lifted them as high above the intellectual level of the rulers of their time as their shameless wickedness
995. degraded them below the level of man. His overthrow of Brittany on the field of Conquereux was followed by the gradual absorption of Southern Touraine, while his restless activity covered the land with castles and abbeys. The very spirit of the Black Count seems still to frown from the dark tower of Duretal on the sunny valley of the Loir. His great
1016. victory at Pontlevoi crushed the rival house of Blois; the seizure of Saumur completed his conquests in the south, while Northern Touraine was won bit by bit till only Tours resisted the Angevin. The

Digitized by Google

treacherous seizure of its Count, Herbert Wake-dog, left Maine at his mercy ere the old man bequeathed his unfinished work to his son. As a warrior Geoffry Martel was hardly inferior to his father. A decisive overthrow wrested Tours from the Count of Blois; a second left Poitou at his mercy; and the seizure of Le Mans brought him to the Norman border. Here, as we have seen, his advance was checked by the genius of William the Conqueror, and with his death the greatness of Anjou seemed for the time to have come to an end.

1044–1060.

**The Angevin marriage.**

Stripped of Maine by the Normans, and weakened by internal dissensions, the weak and profligate administration of Fulc Rechin left Anjou powerless against its rivals along the Seine. It woke to fresh energy with the accession of his son, Fulc of Jerusalem. Now urging the turbulent Norman *noblesse* to revolt against the justice of their King, now supporting the Clito in his struggle against his uncle, offering himself throughout as the one support of France, hemmed in as it was on all sides by the forces of Normandy and its allies the Counts of Blois and Champagne, Fulc was the one enemy whom Henry the First really feared. It was to disarm his restless hostility that the King yielded to his son, Geoffry the Handsome, the hand of his daughter Matilda. No marriage could have been more unpopular, and the secrecy with which it was effected was held by the barons as freeing them from the oath which they had sworn; for no baron could give a husband to his daughter, if he was without sons, save by his lord's consent, and by a strained analogy the barons contended that their own assent was necessary for the marriage of Maud. A more pressing danger lay in the greed of her husband Geoffry, who from his habit of wearing the common broom of Anjou (the *planta genista*) in his helmet had acquired, in addition to his surname of "the Handsome," the more famous title of "Plantagenet." His claims ended at last in intrigues with the Norman nobles, and Henry hurried to the border to meet an expected invasion, but the plot broke down at his presence, the Angevins withdrew, and the old man withdrew to the forest of Lyons to die.

1109–1129.

*Death of Henry.* 1135.

**Stephen of Blois.**

"God give him," wrote the Archbishop of Rouen from Henry's deathbed, "the peace he loved." With him indeed closed the long peace of the Norman rule. An outburst of anarchy followed on the news of his departure, and in the midst of the turmoil Earl Stephen, his nephew, appeared at the gates of London. Stephen was the son of the Conqueror's daughter, Adela, who had married a Count of Blois; he had been brought up at the English court, and his claim as nearest male heir, save his brother, of the Conqueror's blood (for his cousin, the son of Robert, had fallen in Flanders) was supported by his personal popularity. Mere swordsman as he was, his good-humour, his generosity, his very prodigality made him a favourite with all. No noble, however, had as yet ventured to join him, nor had any town opened its gates when London



Digitized by Google

SEC. VII.
ENGLAND AND ANJOU.
870-1154.

poured out to meet him with uproarious welcome. Neither baron nor prelate were present to constitute a National Council, but the great city did not hesitate to take their place. The voice of her citizens had long been accepted as representative of the popular assent in the election of a king; but it marks the progress of English independence under Henry that London now claimed of itself the right of election. Undismayed by the absence of the hereditary counsellors of the crown, its "aldermen and wise folk gathered together the folk-mote, and these providing at their own will for the good of the realm, unanimously resolved to choose a king." The solemn deliberation ended in the choice of Stephen: the citizens swore to defend the King with money and blood, Stephen swore to apply his whole strength to the pacification and good government of the realm.

**Stephen and the baronage.**

If London was true to her oath, Stephen was false to his. The twenty years of his reign are years of a misrule and disorder unknown in our history. Stephen had been acknowledged even by the partisans of Matilda, but his weakness and prodigality soon gave room to feudal revolt. Released from the stern hand of Henry, the barons fortified their castles, and their example was necessarily followed, in self-defence, by the great prelates and nobles who had acted as ministers to the late King. Roger, Bishop of Salisbury, was at the head of this party, and Stephen, suddenly quitting his inaction, seized him at Oxford and flung him into prison till he had consented to surrender his fortresses. The King's violence, while it cost him the support of the clergy, opened the way for Matilda's landing in England; and the country was soon divided between the adherents of the two rivals, the West supporting Matilda, London and the East Stephen. A defeat at Lincoln left the latter a
1141. captive in the hands of his enemies; Matilda entered London, and was received throughout the land as its "Lady," but the disdain with which she repulsed the claim of the city to the enjoyment of its older privileges roused its burghers to arms. Flying to Oxford, she was be-
1142. sieged there by Stephen, who had obtained his release; but she escaped in white robes by a postern, and crossing the river unobserved on
1146. the ice, made her way to Abingdon, to return some years after to Normandy. The war had, in fact, became a mere chaos of pillage and bloodshed. The outrages of the feudal baronage showed from what horrors the Norman rule had so long saved England. No more ghastly picture of a nation's misery has ever been painted than that which closes the English Chronicle, whose last accents falter out amidst the horrors of the time. "They hanged up men by their feet and smoked them with foul smoke. Some were hanged up by their thumbs, others by the head, and burning things were hung on to their feet. They put knotted strings about their head and writhed them till they went into the brain. They put men into prisons where adders and snakes and toads were crawling, and so they tormented them. Some

Digitized by Google

they put into a chest short and narrow and not deep, and that had sharp stones within, and forced men therein so that they broke all their limbs. In many of the castles were hateful and grim things called rachenteges, which two or three men had enough to do to carry. It was thus made: it was fastened to a beam, and had a sharp iron to go about a man's neck and throat, so that he might noways sit, or lie, or sleep, but he bore all the iron. Many thousands they afflicted with hunger." One gleam of national glory broke the darkness of the time. King David of Scotland stood first among the partisans of his kinswoman Matilda, and on the accession of Stephen his army crossed the border to enforce her claim. The pillage and cruelties of the wild tribes of Galloway and the Highlands roused the spirit of the North: baron and freeman gathered at York round Archbishop Thurstan, and marched to the field of Northallerton to await the foe. The sacred banners of S. Cuthbert of Durham, S. Peter of York, S. John of Beverley, and S. Wilfred of Ripon hung from a pole fixed in a four-wheeled car which stood in the centre of the host. "I who wear no armour," shouted the chief of the Galwegians, "will go as far this day as any one with breastplate of mail;" his men charged with wild shouts of "Albin, Albin," and were followed by the Norman knighthood of the Lowlands. The rout, however, was complete; the fierce hordes dashed in vain against the close English ranks around the standard, and the whole army fled in confusion to Carlisle.

*Battle of the Standard.* 1137.

England was rescued from this chaos of misrule by the efforts of the Church. In the early part of Stephen's reign his brother Henry, the Bishop of Winchester, acting as Papal Legate for the realm, had striven to supply the absence of any royal or national authority by convening synods of bishops, and by asserting the moral right of the Church to declare sovereigns unworthy of the throne. The compact between king and people had become a part of constitutional law in the Charter of Henry, but its legitimate consequence in the responsibility of the crown for the execution of the compact was first drawn out by these ecclesiastical councils. From their alternate depositions of Stephen and Matilda flowed the after depositions of Edward and Richard, and the solemn act by which the succession was changed in the case of James. Extravagant and unauthorized as their expression of it may appear, they did express the right of a nation to good government. Henry of Winchester, however, "half monk, half soldier," as he was called, possessed too little religious influence to wield a really spiritual power; it was only at the close of Stephen's reign that the nation really found a moral leader in Theobald, the Archbishop of Canterbury. "To the Church," Thomas justly said afterwards, with the proud consciousness of having been Theobald's right hand, "Henry owed his crown and England her deliverance." Thomas was the son of Gilbert Beket, the Portreeve of

**England and the Church.**



Digitized by Google

SEC. VII.
ENGLAND AND ANJOU.
870-1154.

*Thomas of London.*

London, the site of whose house is still marked by the Mercers' chapel in Cheapside; his mother Rohese was the type of the devout woman of her day, and weighed her boy each year on his birthday against money, clothes, and provisions which she gave to the poor. Thomas grew up amidst the Norman barons and clerks who frequented his father's house with a genial freedom of character tempered by the Norman refinement; he passed from the school of Merton to the University of Paris, and returned to fling himself into the life of the young nobles of the time. Tall, handsome, bright-eyed, ready of wit and speech, his firmness of temper showed itself in his very sports; to rescue his hawk which had fallen into the water he once plunged into a millrace, and was all but crushed by the wheel. The loss of his father's wealth drove him to the court of Archbishop Theobald, and he soon became the Primate's confidant in his plans for the rescue of England. Henry, the son of Matilda and Geoffry, had now by the death of his father become master of Normandy and Anjou, while by his marriage with its duchess, Eleanor of Poitou, he had added Acquitane to his dominions. Thomas, as Theobald's agent, invited Henry to appear in England, and on the Duke's landing the Archbishop interposed between the rival claimants to the crown. The
1153. Treaty of Wallingford abolished the evils of the long anarchy; the castles were to be razed, the crown lands resumed, the foreign mercenaries banished from the country. Stephen was recognized as King, and in turn acknowledged Henry as his heir. But a year had hardly passed when Stephen's death gave his rival the crown.

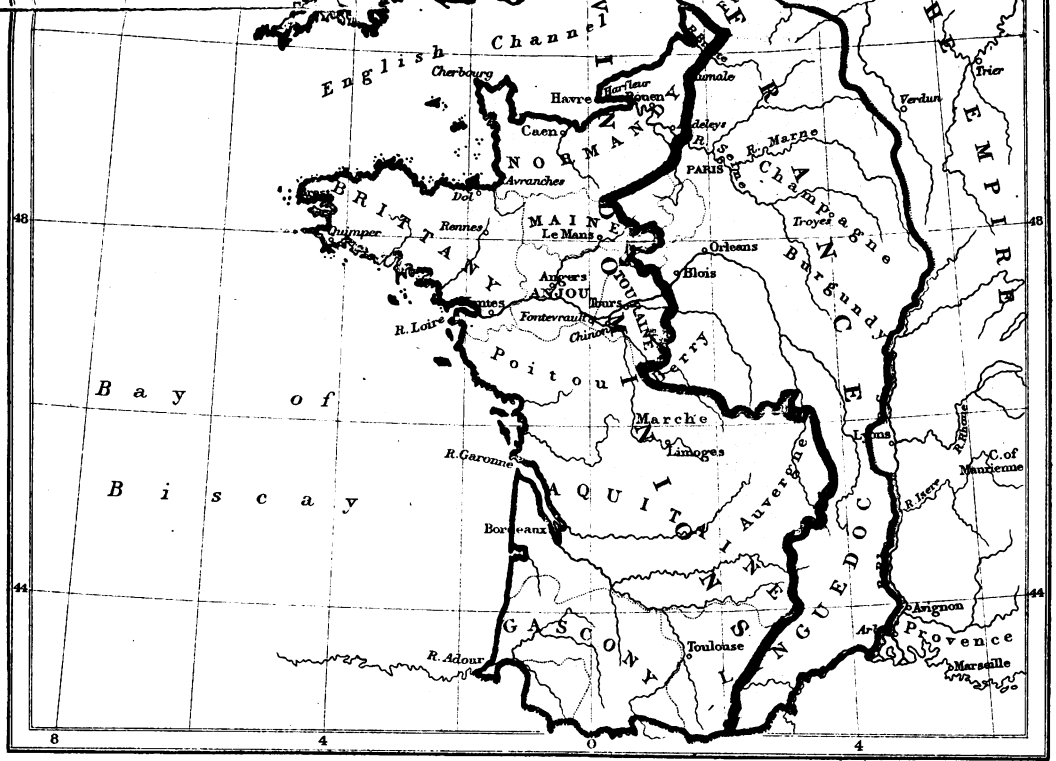
## Section VIII.—Henry the Second, 1154-1189.

[*Authorities.*—Up to the death of Archbishop Thomas we have only the letters of Beket himself, Foliot, and John of Salisbury, collected by Dr. Giles; but this dearth is followed by a vast outburst of historical industry. From 1169 till 1192 our primary authority is the Chronicle known as that of Benedict of Peterborough, admirably edited by Professor Stubbs, who has shown the probability of its authorship being really due to the royal treasurer, Bishop Richard Fitz-Neal. It is continued to 1201 by Roger of Howden. Both are works of the highest value, and have been edited for the Rolls series by Professor Stubbs, whose prefaces have thrown a new light on the constitutional history of Henry's reign. The history by William of Newborough (which ends in 1198) is a work of the classical school, like William of Malmesbury, but distinguished by its fairness and good sense. The chronicles of Ralf Niger, with the additions of Ralf of Coggeshall, that of Gervase of Canterbury, the Life of S. Hugh of Lincoln (edited by Mr. Dimock), the voluminous works of Giraldus Cambrensis, now editing by Professor Brewer and Mr. Dimock, may be selected as especially useful amidst the vast mass of materials for Henry's reign. I have given some account of these in the opening of the next chapter. Lord Lyttelton's "Life of Henry the Second" is a full and sober account of the time; Canon Robertson's Biography of Beket is accurate, but hostile in tone.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google




Stanford's Geographical Establishment.

London; Macmillan & Co.

Digitized by Google

BRITISH MUSEUM
1 FE 75

Digitized by Google

in his "Documents" Professor Stubbs has printed the various "Assizes," and the Dialogus de Scaccario, which explains the financial administration of the Curia Regis.]

Young as he was, Henry mounted the throne with a resolute purpose of government which his reign carried steadily out. His practical, serviceable frame suited the hardest worker of his time. There was something in his build and look, in the square stout frame, the fiery face, the close-cropped hair, the prominent eyes, the bull neck, the coarse strong hands, the bowed legs, that marked out the keen, stirring, coarse-fibred man of business. "He never sits down," said one who observed him closely; "he is always on his legs from morning till night." Orderly in business, careless in appearance, sparing in diet, never resting or giving his servants rest, chatty, inquisitive, endowed with a singular charm of address and strength of memory, obstinate in love or hatred, a fair scholar, a great hunter, his general air that of a rough, passionate, busy man, Henry's personal character told directly on the character of his reign. His accession marks the period of amalgamation, when neighbourhood and traffic and intermarriage drew Englishmen and Normans so rapidly into a single people, that the two races soon cease to be distinguishable from one another. A national feeling was thus springing up, before which the barriers of the older feudalism were to be swept away. Henry had even less reverence for the feudal past than the men of his day; he was, indeed, utterly without the imagination and reverence which enable men to sympathise with any past at all. He had a practical man's impatience of the obstacles thrown in the way of his reforms by the older constitution of the realm, nor could he understand other men's reluctance to purchase undoubted improvements by the sacrifice of customs and traditions of bygone days. Without any theoretical hostility to the co-ordinate powers of the state, it seemed to him a perfectly reasonable and natural course to trample either baronage or Church under foot to gain his end of good government. He saw clearly, that the remedy for such anarchy as England had endured under Stephen lay in the establishment of a kingly government unembarrassed by any privileges of order or class, administered by royal servants, and in whose public administration the nobles acted simply as delegates of the sovereign. His work was to lie in the organization of judicial and administrative forms which realized this idea, but of the great currents of thought and feeling which were tending in the same direction he knew nothing. What he did for the great moral and social revolution of his time was simply to let it alone. Religion grew more and more identified with patriotism under the eyes of a King who whispered, and scribbled, and looked at picture-books during mass, who never confessed, and cursed God in wild frenzies of blas-

Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII. HENRY THE SECOND. 1154-1189.

phemy. Great peoples formed themselves on both sides of the sea round a sovereign who bent the whole force of his mind to hold together an Empire which the growth of nationality must inevitably destroy. There is throughout a tragic grandeur in the irony of Henry's position, that of a Sforza of the fifteenth century set in the midst of the twelfth, building up by patience and policy and craft a composite dominion, alien to the deepest sympathies of his age, and swept away in the end by popular forces to whose existence his very cleverness and activity blinded him. But indirectly, and unconsciously, his policy did more than that of all his predecessors to prepare England for the unity and freedom which the fall of his house was to reveal.

**Henry and the Church.**

He had been placed on the throne, as we have seen, by the Church. His first work was to repair the evils which England had endured till his accession by the restoration of the system of Henry the First; and it was with the aid and counsel of Theobald that the foreign marauders were driven from the realm, the castles demolished in spite of the opposition of the baronage, the King's Court and Exchequer restored. Age and infirmity however warned the Primate to retire from the post of minister, and his power fell into the younger and more vigorous hands of Thomas Beket, who had long acted as his confidential adviser. Thomas, who now became Chancellor, won the personal favour of the King. The two young men had, in Theobald's words, "but one heart and mind;" Henry jested in the Chancellor's hall, or tore his cloak from his shoulders in rough horse-play as they rode through the streets. He loaded his favourite with riches and honours, but there is no ground for thinking that Thomas in any degree influenced his system of rule. Henry's policy seems, for good or evil, to have been throughout his own. As yet, his designs appeared to aim chiefly at power across the Channel, where he was already master of a third of our present France. He had inherited Anjou and Touraine from his father, Maine and Normandy from his mother, and the seven provinces of the South, Poitou, Saintonge, Auvergne, Perigord, the Limousin the Angoumois, and Guienne, as the dowry of his wife. The actual dominions of Lewis the Seventh were far smaller than his own, and the tact of Beket had bound the French king to Henry's interests by securing for Henry's son the hand of Marguerite, the daughter of Lewis, and in default of sons the heiress of his realm. But ever Lewis was roused to resistance when Henry prepared to enforce by arms his claims on Toulouse; he threw himself into the town, and Henry, in spite of his Chancellor's remonstrances, at once withdrew. Thomas had fought bravely throughout the campaign, at the head of the 700 knights who formed his household, but the King had other work for him than war. On Theobald's death he at once forced on the monks of Canterbury, and on Thomas himself, his election as Archbishop

1162.

Digitized by Google

His purpose in this appointment was soon revealed. Henry at once proposed to the bishops that a clerk, convicted of a crime, should be deprived of his orders, and handed over to the King's tribunals. The local courts of the feudal baronage had been roughly shorn of their power by the judicial reforms of Henry the First, and the Church courts, as the Conqueror had created them, with their exclusive right of justice over the whole body of educated men throughout the realm, formed the one great exception to the system which was concentrating all jurisdiction in the hands of the King. The bishops yielded, but opposition came from the very prelate whom Henry had created to enforce his will. From the moment of his appointment Thomas had flung himself with the whole energy of his nature into the part he had to play. At the first intimation of Henry's purpose he had pointed with a laugh to his gay attire—"You are choosing a fine dress to figure at the head of your Canterbury monks;" but once monk and primate, he passed with a fevered earnestness from luxury to asceticism. Even as minister he had opposed the King's designs, and foretold their future opposition: "You will soon hate me as much as you love me now," he said, "for you assume an authority in the affairs of the Church to which I shall never assent." A prudent man might have doubted the wisdom of destroying the only shelter which protected piety or learning against a despot like the Red King, and in the mind of Thomas the ecclesiastical immunities were parts of the sacred heritage of the Church. He stood without support; the Pope advised concession, the bishops forsook him, and Thomas bent at last to agree to the Constitutions, or Concordat between Church and State, which Henry presented to the Council of Clarendon. Many of its clauses were simply a re-enactment of the system established by the Conqueror. The election of bishop or abbot was to take place before royal officers, in the King's chapel, and with the King's assent. The prelate elect was bound to do homage to the King for his lands before consecration, and to hold his lands as a barony from the King, subject to all feudal burthens of taxation and attendance in the King's court. No bishop might leave the realm without the royal permission. No tenant in chief or royal servant should be excommunicated, or their land placed under interdict, but by the King's assent. But the legislation respecting ecclesiastical jurisdiction was wholly new. The King's court was to decide whether a suit between clerk and layman, whose nature was disputed, belonged to the Church courts or the King's. A royal officer was to be present in all ecclesiastical proceedings, in order to confine the Bishop's court within its own due limits, and a clerk once convicted there passed at once under the civil jurisdiction. An appeal was left from the Archbishop's court to the King's court for defect of justice. The privilege of sanctuary in churches or churchyards was repealed, so far as property and not persons was concerned. No serf's

*Constitutions of Clarendon.* 1164.

Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII.
HENRY THE SECOND.
1154–1189.

son could be admitted to orders without his lord's permission. After a passionate refusal the Primate at last set his seal to the Constitutions, but his assent was soon retracted, and the King's savage resentment threw the whole moral advantage of the position into the Archbishop's hands. Vexatious charges were brought against him; in the Council of Northampton his life was said to be in danger, and all urged him to submit. But in the presence of danger the courage of the man rose to its full height; grasping his archiepiscopal cross he entered the royal court, forbade the nobles to condemn him, and appealed to the Papal See. Shouts of "Traitor! traitor!" followed him as he retired. The Primate turned fiercely at the word: "Were I a knight," he retorted, "my sword should answer that foul taunt." At nightfall he fled in disguise, and reached France through Flanders. For six years the contest raged bitterly; at Rome, at Paris the agents of the two powers intrigued against each other. Henry stooped to acts of the meanest persecution in driving the Primate's kinsmen from England, and in confiscating the lands of their order till the monks of Pontigny should refuse Thomas a home; while Beket himself exhausted the patience of his friends by his violence and excommunications, as well as by the stubbornness with which he clung to the offensive clause "Saving the honour of my order," the addition of which would have practically neutralized the King's reforms. The Pope counselled mildness, Lewis himself for a time withdrew his support, his own clerks gave way at last. "Come up," said one of them bitterly when his horse stumbled on the road, "saving the honour of the Church and my order." But neither warning nor desertion moved the resolution of the Primate. Henry, in dread of Papal excommunication, resolved at last on the coronation of his son in defiance of the privileges of Canterbury, by the Archbishop of York; but the Pope's hands were now freed by his successes in Italy, and the threat of his interposition forced the King to a show of submission. The Archbishop was allowed to return after a reconciliation with the King at Fretheval, and the Kentishmen flocked around him with uproarious welcome as he entered Canterbury. "This is England," said his clerks, as they saw the white headlands of the coast. "You will wish yourself elsewhere before fifty days are gone," said Thomas, sadly, and his foreboding showed his appreciation of Henry's character. He was now in the royal power, and orders had already been issued by the younger Henry for his arrest, when four knights from the King's court, spurred to outrage by a passionate outburst of their master's wrath, crossed the sea and forced their way into the Archbishop's palace. After a stormy parley with him in his chamber they withdrew to arm, and Thomas was hurried by his clerks into the cathedral. As he reached the steps leading from the transept to the choir his pursuers burst in shouting from the cloisters. "Where," cried Reginald Fitzurse in the dusk of the dimly

*Flight of Archbishop Thomas.* 1164.

*Beket's return.* 1170.

Digitized by Google

lighted minster, "where is the traitor, Thomas Beket?" The Primate turned resolutely back: "Here am I, no traitor, but a priest of God," he replied, and again descending the steps he placed himself with his back against a pillar and fronted his foes. All the bravery, the violence of his old knightly life seemed to revive in Thomas as he tossed back the threats and demands of his assailants. "You are our prisoner," shouted Fitzurse, and the four knights seized him to drag him from the church. "Do not touch me, Reginald," shouted the Primate, "pander that you are, you owe me fealty;" and availing himself of his personal strength he shook him roughly off. "Strike, strike," retorted Fitzurse, and blow after blow struck Thomas to the ground. A retainer of Ranulf de Broc with the point of his sword scattered the Primate's brains on the ground. "Let us be off," he cried triumphantly, "this traitor will never rise again."

**Henry and the baronage.**

The brutal murder was received with a thrill of horror throughout Christendom; miracles were wrought at the martyr's tomb; he was canonized, and became the most popular of English saints; but Henry's active negotiations with the Papacy averted the excommunication which at first threatened to avenge the deed of blood. The Constitutions of Clarendon were in form partially annulled, and liberty of canonical election restored to bishoprics and abbacies. In reality, however, the victory remained with the King. Throughout his reign ecclesiastical appointments were practically in his hands, the bishops remained faithful to the royal cause, while the King's court asserted its power over the episcopal jurisdiction. The close of the great struggle left Henry free to complete his great work of legal reform. He had already availed himself of the expedition against Toulouse to deliver a crushing blow at the baronage by the commutation of their personal services in the field for a money payment, a "scutage," or "shield money," for each fief. The King thus became master of resources which enabled him to dispense with the military support of his tenants, and to maintain a force of mercenary soldiers in their place. The diminution of the military power of the nobles had been accompanied by measures which robbed them of their legal jurisdiction. The circuits of the judges were restored, and instructions were given them to enter the manors of the barons and make inquiry into their privileges; while the office of sheriff was withdrawn from the great nobles of the shire and entrusted to the lawyers and courtiers who already furnished the staff of justices. The resentment of the barons found an opportunity of displaying itself when the King's eldest son, whose coronation had played so great a part in the history of Archbishop Thomas, suddenly took refuge with the King of France, and demanded to be put in possession of his English realm. France, Flanders, and Scotland joined the league against Henry, a French army appeared beneath the walls of Rouen, while the King's younger sons, Richard and Geoffry, took up arms in Acqui-

*The great scutage.*

*Inquest of sheriffs.* 1170.

Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII.
HENRY THE SECOND.
1154-1189.

taine. In England a descent of Flemish mercenaries under the Earl of Leicester had been repulsed by the loyal justiciaries near S. Edmundsbury; but Lewis had no sooner invaded Normandy than the whole extent of the danger was revealed. The Scots crossed the border, Roger de Mowbray rose in revolt in Yorkshire, Earl Ferrars in the midland shires, Hugh Bigod in the eastern counties, while a Flemish fleet prepared to support the insurrection by a descent upon the coast. The murder of Archbishop Thomas still hung around Henry's neck, and his first act in hurrying to meet these perils in England was to prostrate himself before the shrine of the new martyr, and to submit to a public scourging in expiation of his sin. But his penance was hardly wrought when all danger was dispelled by a series of triumphs. The King of Scotland, William the Lion, surprised by the English under cover of a mist, fell into the hands of his justiciary, Ranulf de Glanvil, and at the retreat of the Scots the
1174. English rebels hastened to lay down their arms. With the army of mercenaries which he had brought to England, Henry was able to raise the siege of Rouen, and to reduce his sons to submission. The revolt of the baronage, easily as it had been subdued, became the pretext for fresh blows at their power. The greatest of these was his
*Assize of Arms.* 1181. Assize of Arms, which restored the national militia to the place which it had lost at the Conquest. The substitution of scutage for military service had practically freed the crown from the support of the baronage and their feudal retainers; the assize substituted for this feudal organization the older military obligation of every freeman to serve in the defence of the realm. Every knight was forced to arm himself with coat of mail, and shield and lance; every freeholder with lance and hauberk; every burgess and poorer freeman with lance and iron helmet. This universal levy of the armed nation was wholly at the disposal of the King for purposes of defence.

**Henry and the law.**

The measures we have named were only part of Henry's legislation. His reign, it has been truly said, "initiated the rule of law," as distinct from the despotism—tempered in the case of his grandfather by routine—of the earlier Norman kings. It was in successive "Assizes," brief codes issued with the sanction of the great councils of barons and prelates he summoned year by year, that he perfected, by a system of reforms, the administrative measures which had begun with Henry the First. The fabric of our judicial legislation commences with the
*Assize of Clarendon.* 1166. Assize of Clarendon, the first object of which was to provide for the order of the realm by reviving the old English system of mutual security, or frank-pledge. No stranger might abide in any place save a borough, and there but for a single night, unless sureties were given for his good behaviour; and the list of such strangers was to be sub-
*Trial by jury.* mitted to the itinerant justices. In the provisions of this assize for the repression of crime we find the origin of trial by jury, so often

Digitized by Google

attributed to earlier times. Twelve lawful men of each hundred, with four from each township, were sworn to present those who were known or reputed as criminals within their district for trial by ordeal. The jurors were thus not merely witnesses, but sworn to act as judges also in determining the value of the charge, and it is this double character of Henry's jurors that has descended to our "grand jury," who still remain charged with the duty of presenting criminals for trial after examination of the witnesses against them. Two later steps brought the jury to its modern condition. Under Edward the First witnesses acquainted with the particular fact in question were added in each case to the general jury, and at a later time by the separation of these two classes of jurors the last became simply "witnesses," without any judicial power, while the first ceased to be witnesses at all, and, as our modern jurors, remained only judges of the testimony given. With this assize, too, the practice which had prevailed from the earliest English times, of "compurgation," passed away. Under this system the accused could be acquitted of the charge by the voluntary oath of his neighbours and kinsmen; but for the fifty years which followed the Assize of Clarendon his trial, after the investigation of the grand jury, was found solely in the ordeal or "judgment of God." Innocence could be proved by the power of holding hot iron in the hand, or by sinking when flung into the water, for swimming was a proof of guilt. The ordeal by battle or judicial combat introduced by the Normans had, as we have seen in the case of S. Edmundsbury, been confined to the feudal manors. It was the abolition of the whole system of ordeal by the Council of Lateran which led the way to the establishment of what is called a "petty jury" for the final trial of the prisoner. The Assize of Clarendon was expanded in that of Northampton, issued as instructions to the judges after the rebellion of the Barons. Henry, as we have seen, had restored the King's court and the occasional circuits of its justices: at the Council of Northampton he rendered this institution permanent and regular by dividing the kingdom into six districts, to each of which he assigned three itinerant justices. The circuits thus defined correspond roughly with those that exist at the present day. The primary object of these circuits was undoubtedly financial, but the judicial functions of the judges were extended by the abolition of all feudal exemptions from their jurisdiction. The chief danger of the new system lay in the opportunities it afforded to judicial corruption; and so great were its abuses that Henry was soon forced to restrict for a time the number of justices to five—reserving appeals from their court to himself in council. It is from this Upper Court of Appeal, which he thus erected, that the judicial powers now exercised by the Privy Council are derived, as well as the equitable jurisdiction of the Chancellor. In the next century it becomes the great council of the realm, from which

1216.

*Assize of Northampton.* 1176.

1178.

Digitized by Google

Sec. VIII.
Henry the Second.
1154–1189.

the Privy Council drew its legislative, and the House of Lords its judicial character. The court of Star Chamber and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council are later offshoots of Henry's creation. The King's court, which became inferior to this higher jurisdiction, divided after the Great Charter into the three distinct courts of the King's Bench, the Exchequer, and the Common Pleas, which by the close of the reign of Henry the Third received distinct judges, and became for all purposes separate.

**Death of Henry the Second.**

Henry was now in appearance thoroughly master of his dominions, and his invasion of Ireland had added that island to the possessions of his English crown. But the course of triumph and legislation was rudely broken by the quarrels and revolts of his sons. The successive deaths of Henry and Geoffry were followed by intrigues

1189.

between Richard, who had been entrusted with Acquitaine, and Philip, who had succeeded Lewis on the throne of France. The plot broke out at last in actual conflict; Richard did homage to Philip, and the allied forces suddenly appeared before Le Mans, from which Henry retreated in headlong flight towards Normandy. From a height where he halted to look back on the burning city, so dear to him as his birthplace, the old King hurled his curse against God: "Since Thou hast taken from me the town I loved best, where I was born and bred, and where my father lies buried, I will have my revenge on Thee too—I will rob thee of that thing Thou lovest most in me." Death was upon him, and the longing of a dying man drew him to the home of his race. Tours fell as he lay at Saumur, and the hunted King was driven to beg mercy from his foes. They gave him the list of the conspirators against him: at the head of them was his youngest and best-loved son, John. "Now," he said, as he turned his face to the wall, "let things go as they will—I care no more for myself or for the world." He was borne to Chinon by the silvery waters of Vienne, and muttering, "Shame, shame on a conquered King," passed sullenly away.

### Section IX.—The Fall of the Angevins, 1189-1204.

[*Authorities.*—In addition to those mentioned in the last Section, the Chronicle of Richard of Devizes, and the "Itinerarium Regis Ricardi," edited by Professor Stubbs, are useful for Richard's reign. Rigord's "Gesta Philippi," and the "Philippis" of Brito Armoricus, the chief authorities on the French side, are given in Duchesne, "Hist. Franc. Scriptores," vol. v.]

**Richard the First.**

We need not follow Richard in the Crusade which occupied the beginning of his reign, and which left England for four years without a

1190–1194.

ruler,—in his quarrels in Sicily, his conquest of Cyprus, his victory at Jaffa, his fruitless march upon Jerusalem, the truce he concluded with Saladin, his shipwreck as he returned, or his two imprisonments in

Digitized by Google

Germany. Freed at last from his captivity, he found himself among dangers which he was too clear-sighted to undervalue. Less wary than his father, less ingenious in his political conceptions than John, Richard was far from a mere soldier. A love of adventure, a pride in sheer physical strength, here and there a romantic generosity, jostled roughly with the craft, the unscrupulousness, the violence of his race; but he was at heart a statesman, cool and patient in the execution of his plans as he was bold in their conception. "The devil is loose; take care of yourself," Philip had written to John at the news of the King's release. In the French king's case a restless ambition was spurred to action by insults which he had borne during the Crusade, and he had availed himself of Richard's imprisonment to invade Normandy. John, traitor to his brother as to his father, had joined his alliance; while the Lords of Acquitaine rose in revolt under the troubadour Bertrand de Born. Jealousy of the rule of strangers, weariness of the turbulence of the mercenary soldiers of the Angevins or of the greed and oppression of their financial administration, combined with an impatience of their firm government and vigorous justice to alienate the *noblesse* of their provinces on the Continent. Loyalty among the people there was none; even Anjou, the home of their race, drifted towards Philip as steadily as Poitou. England was drained by the tax for Richard's ransom, and irritated by his resumption on his return of all the sales by which he had raised funds for his Crusade. For some time he could do nothing but hold Philip in check on the Norman frontier, surprise his treasure at Fretheval, and reduce to submission the rebels of Acquitaine. A truce, which these successes wrested from Philip, gave him breathing-space for a final blow at his opponent.

1194-1196.

Extortion had wrung from England wealth which again filled the royal treasury, and Richard's bribes detached Flanders from the French alliance, and united the Counts of Chartres, Champagne, and Boulogne with the Bretons in a revolt against Philip. Otho, a nephew of Richard's, was now one of two rival claimants of the Empire, and William Longchamp of Ely was busy knitting an alliance which would bring the German lances to bear on the King of Paris. But the security of Normandy was requisite to the success of these wider plans, and Richard saw that its defence could no longer rest on the loyalty of the Norman people. His father might trace his descent through Matilda from the line of Hrolf, but the Angevin ruler was in fact a stranger to the Norman. Nor did Henry appeal to his subjects' loyalty; he held them, as he held his other provinces, by a strictly administrative bond, as a foreign master, and guarded their border with foreign troops. Richard only exaggerated his father's policy. It was impossible for a Norman to recognize his Duke with any real sympathy in the Angevin prince whom he saw moving along the border at the

**Château Gaillard.**

Digitized by Google

SEC. IX. THE FALL OF THE ANGEVINS. 1189-1204.

head of Brabançon mercenaries, in whose camp the old names of the Norman baronage were missing, and Merchadè, a mere Gascon ruffian, held supreme command. The purely military site which Richard selected for the new fortress with which he guarded the border, showed his realization of the fact that Normandy could now only be held in a military way. As a monument of warlike skill his "Saucy Castle," Château Gaillard, stands first among the fortresses of the middle ages. Richard fixed its site where the Seine bends suddenly at Gaillon in a great semicircle to the north, and where the valley of Les Andelys breaks the line of the chalk cliffs along its bank. Blue masses of woodland crown the distant hills; within the river curve lies a dull reach of flat meadow, round which the Seine, broken with green islets, and dappled with the grey and blue of the sky, flashes like a silver bow on its way to Rouen. The castle formed a part of an entrenched camp which Richard designed to cover his Norman capital. Approach by the river was blocked by a stockade and a bridge of boats, by a fort on the islet in mid stream, and by the tower which the King built in the valley of the Gambon, then an impassable marsh. In the angle between this valley and the Seine, on a spur of the chalk hills which only a narrow neck of land connects with the general plateau, rose, at the height of 300 feet above the river, the crowning fortress of the whole. Its outworks and the walls which connected it with the town and stockade have for the most part gone, but time and the hand of man have done little to destroy the fortifications themselves—the fosse, hewn deep into the solid rock, with casements hollowed out along its sides, the fluted walls of the citadel, the huge donjon looking down on the brown roofs and huddled gables of Les Andelys. Even now, in its ruin, we can understand the triumphant outburst of its royal builder as he saw it rising against the sky: "How pretty a child is mine, this child of but one year old!"

**Richard's death.**

The easy reduction of Normandy on the fall of Château Gaillard at a later time proved Richard's foresight; but foresight and sagacity were mingled in him with a brutal violence and a callous indifference to honour. The treaty which interrupted his war with Philip provided that Andelys should not be fortified, and three months after its ratification he was building his "Saucy Castle." "I will take it, were its walls of iron," Philip exclaimed in wrath as he saw it rise. "I would hold it, were the walls of butter," was the defiant answer of his foe. It was Church land, and the Archbishop of Rouen laid Normandy under interdict at its seizure, but the King met the interdict with mockery, and intrigued with Rome till the censure was withdrawn. He was just as defiant of a "rain of blood," whose fall scared his courtiers. "Had an angel from heaven bid him abandon his work," says a cool observer, "he would have answered with a curse." The twelvemonth's hard work, in fact, by securing the Norman frontier, set Richard free to deal

Digitized by Google

his long-meditated blow at Philip. Money only was wanting, and the King listened with more than the greed of his race to the rumour that a treasure had been found in the fields of the Limousin. Twelve knights of gold seated round a golden table were the find, it was said, of the Lord of Chaluz. Treasure-trove at any rate there was, and Richard prowled around the walls, but the castle held stubbornly out till the King's greed passed into savage menace; he would hang all, he swore—man, woman, the very child at the breast. In the midst of his threats an arrow from the walls struck him down. He died as he had lived, pardoning with kingly generosity the archer who had shot him, outraging with bitter mockery the priests who exhorted him to repentance and restitution. 1199.

**The loss of Normandy.**

The jealousy of province against province broke out fiercely at his death. John was acknowledged as King in England and Normandy, while Anjou, Maine, and Touraine did homage to Arthur, the son of his elder brother Geoffry, the late Duke of Brittany. The ambition of Philip, who protected his cause, turned the day against Arthur; the Angevins rose against the French garrisons with which the French King practically annexed the country, and John was at last owned as master of the whole dominion of his house. A fresh outbreak of war was fatal to his rival; surprised at the siege of Mirabeau by a rapid march of the King, Arthur was taken prisoner to Rouen, and murdered there, as men believed, by his uncle's hand. The brutal outrage at once roused Poitou in revolt, Anjou and Touraine welcomed Philip, and the French king marched straight on Normandy. The ease with which its conquest was effected is explained by the utter absence of any popular resistance on the part of the Normans themselves. Half a century before the sight of a Frenchman in the land would have roused every peasant to arms from Avranches to Dieppe, but town after town surrendered at the mere summons of Philip, and the conquest was hardly over before Normandy settled down into the most loyal of the provinces of France. Much of this was due to the wise liberality with which Philip met the claims of the towns to independence and self-government, as well as to the overpowering force and military ability with which the conquest was effected. But the utter absence of all opposition sprang, as we have seen, from a deeper cause; to the Norman, his transfer from John to Philip was a mere passing from one foreign master to another, and foreigner for foreigner Philip was the less alien of the two. Between France and Normandy there had been as many years of friendship as of strife; between Norman and Angevin lay a century of bitterest hate. Moreover, the subjection to France was the realization in fact of a dependence which had always existed in theory; Philip entered Rouen as the over-lord of its Dukes, while the submission to the house of Anjou had been the most humiliating of all submissions, the submission to an equal. 1200. 1203.

Digitized by Google

SEC. IX.
THE FALL OF THE ANGEVINS.
1189-1204.

It was the consciousness of this temper in the Norman people that forced John to abandon all hope of resistance on the failure of his attempt to relieve Château Gaillard, by the siege of which Philip commenced his invasion. The skill with which the combined movements for its relief were planned proves the King's military ability. The besiegers were parted into two masses by the Seine ; the bulk of their forces were camped in the level space within the bend of the river, while one division was thrown across it to occupy the valley of the Gambon, and sweep the country around of its provisions. John proposed to cut the French army in two by destroying the bridge of boats which formed the only communication between the two bodies, while the whole of his own forces flung themselves on the rear of the French division encamped in the *cul de sac* formed by the river-bend, and without any exit save the bridge. Had the attack been carried out as ably as it was planned, it must have ended in Philip's ruin ; but the two assaults were not made simultaneously, and were successively repulsed. The repulse was followed by the utter collapse of the military system by which the Angevins had held Normandy ; John's treasury was exhausted, and his mercenaries passed over to the foe. The King's despairing appeal to the Duchy itself came too late ; its nobles were already treating with Philip, and the towns were incapable of resisting the siege train of the French. It was despair of any aid from Normandy that drove John over sea to seek it as fruitlessly from England, but with the fall of Château Gaillard, after a gallant struggle, the province passed without a struggle into the French king's hands. On its loss hung the destinies of England, and the interest that attaches one to the grand ruin on the heights of Les Andelys is, that it represents the ruin of a system as well as of a camp. From its dark donjon and broken walls we see not merely the pleasant vale of Seine, but the sedgy flats of our own Runnymede.

Digitized by Google

# CHAPTER III.

## THE GREAT CHARTER.

### 1204—1265.

### Section I.—English Literature under the Norman and Angevin Kings.

[*Authorities.*—For the general literature of this period, see Mr. Morley's "English Writers from the Conquest to Chaucer," vol. i. part ii. The prefaces of Mr. Brewer and Mr. Dimock to his collected works in the Rolls Series give all that can be known of Gerald de Barri. The Poems of Walter Map have been edited by Mr. Wright for the Camden Society; Layamon, by Sir F. Madden.]

---

It is in a review of the literature of England during the period that we have just traversed that we shall best understand the new English people with which John, when driven from Normandy, found himself face to face.

**The literary revival.**

In his contest with Beket, Henry the Second had been powerfully aided by the silent revolution which now began to part the purely literary class from the Church. During the earlier ages of our history we have seen literature springing up in ecclesiastical schools, and protecting itself against the ignorance and violence of the time under ecclesiastical privileges. With but two exceptions, in fact, those of Ælfred and Ethelweard, all our writers from Bæda to the days of the Angevins are clergy or monks. The revival of letters which followed the Conquest was a purely ecclesiastical revival; the intellectual impulse which Bec had given to Normandy travelled across the Channel with the new Norman abbots who were established in the greater English monasteries; and writing-rooms or scriptoria, where the chief works of Latin literature, patristic or classical, were copied and illuminated, the lives of saints compiled, and entries noted in the monastic chronicle, formed from this time a part of every religious house of any importance. Fruitful of results as it had been in France, the philosophical and devotional impulse given by Anselm produced no English work of theology or metaphysics; it is characteristic of the national temper that the literary revival at once took the older historical form. At Durham, Turgot and Simeon threw into Latin shape the national annals to the time of Henry the First with an especial regard to northern affairs, while the earlier events of Stephen's reign were noted down by two Priors of Hexham in the wild border-land between Eng-



Digitized by Google

SEC. I.

ENGLISH LITERATURE UNDER THE NORMAN AND ANGEVIN KINGS.

land and the Scots. These, however, were the colourless jottings of mere annalists; it was in the Scriptorium of Canterbury, in Osbern's lives of the English saints Dunstan and Elfeg, or in Eadmer's record of the struggle of Anselm against the Red King and his successor, that we see the first indications of a distinctively English feeling telling on the new literature. The national impulse is yet more conspicuous in the two historians that followed. The war-songs of the English conquerors of Britain were preserved by Henry, the Archdeacon of Huntingdon, who wove them into annals compiled from Bæda and the Chronicle; while William, the librarian of Malmesbury, has industriously collected the lighter ballads which embodied the popular traditions of the English Kings. The revival of English patriotism is yet more distinctly visible in the Sayings of Ælfred and the legend of Hereward's struggle in the Fens of Ely, whose composition may probably be placed in the reign of Henry the Second.

**Literature and the Court.**

*William of Malmesbury.*

We may see the tendency of English literature at the close of the Norman period in William of Malmesbury. In himself, as in his work, he marks the fusion of the conquerors and the conquered, for he was of both English and Norman parentage, and his sympathies were as divided as his blood. In the form and style of his writings he shows the influence of those classical studies which were now reviving throughout Christendom. Monk as he is, he discards the older ecclesiastical models and the annalistic form. Events are grouped together with no strict reference to time, while the lively narrative flows rapidly and loosely along, with constant breaks of digression, over the general history of Europe and the Church. It is in this change of historic spirit that William takes his place as first of the more statesmanlike and philosophic school of historians who began soon to arise in direct connection with the Court, and amongst whom the author of the chronicle which commonly bears the name of "Benedict of Peterborough," with his continuator Roger of Howden, are the most conspicuous. Both held judicial offices under Henry the Second, and it is to their position at Court that they owe the fulness and accuracy of their information as to affairs at home and abroad, their copious supply of official documents, and the purely political temper with which they regard the conflict of Church and State in their time. The same freedom from ecclesiastical bias, combined with remarkable critical ability, is found in the history of William, the Canon of Newborough. From the time of Henry the First, in fact, the English court had become the centre of a distinctly secular literature. The treatise of Ranulf de Glanvill, the justiciar of Henry the Second, is the earliest work on English law, as that of the royal treasurer, Richard Fitz-Neal, on the Exchequer, is the earliest on English government. Romance had long before taken root in the court of Henry the First, where, under the patronage of Queen Maud,

*The Court historians.*

Digitized by Google

the "Dreams of Arthur," so long cherished by the Celts of Brittany, which had travelled to Wales in the train of the exile Rhys ap Tewdor, took shape in the History of the Britons by Geoffry of Monmouth. Myth, legend, tradition, the classical pedantry of the day, the Welsh dreams of future triumph over the Saxon, the memories of the Crusades and of the world-wide dominion of Charles the Great, were mingled together by this daring fabulist in a work whose popularity became at once immense. Alfred of Beverly transferred his inventions into the region of sober history, while two Norman *trouveurs*, Gaimar and Wace, translated them into French verse. So complete was the credence they obtained, that Arthur's tomb at Glastonbury was visited by Henry the Second, while the child of his son Geoffry and of Constance of Brittany bore the name of the Celtic hero. Out of Geoffry's creation grew little by little the poem of the Table Round. Brittany, which had mingled with the story of Arthur the older and more mysterious legend of the Enchanter Merlin, lent that of Lancelot to the wandering minstrels of the day, who moulded it, as they wandered from hall to hall, into the familiar song of knighthood wrested from its loyalty by the love of woman. The stories of Tristram and Gawayne, at first as independent as that of Lancelot, were drawn with it into the whirlpool of Arthurian romance; and when the Church, jealous of the popularity of the legends of chivalry, invented as a counteracting influence the poem of the Sacred Dish, the San Graal which held the blood of the Cross, invisible to all eyes but those of the pure in heart, the genius of a Court poet, Walter de Map, wove the rival legends together, sent Arthur and his knights wandering over sea and land in the quest of the San Graal, and crowned the work by the figure of Sir Galahad, the type of ideal knighthood, without fear and without reproach.

**Walter de Map.**

Walter was one of two remarkable men who stand before us as the representatives of a sudden outburst of literary, social, and religious criticism which followed the growth of romance and the appearance of a freer historical tone in the court of the two Henries. Born on the Welsh border, a student at Paris, a favourite with the King, a royal chaplain, justiciary, and ambassador, the genius of Walter de Map was as various as it was prolific. He is as much at his ease in sweeping together the chit-chat of the time in his "Courtly Trifles," as in creating the character of Sir Galahad. But he only rose to his fullest strength when he turned from the fields of romance to that of Church reform, and embodied the ecclesiastical abuses of his day in the figure of his "Bishop Goliath." The whole spirit of Henry and his Court in their struggle with Beket is reflected and illustrated in the apocalypse and confession of this imaginary prelate. Picture after picture strips the veil from the corruption of the mediæval Church, its indolence, its thirst for gain, its secret immorality. The whole body of the clergy,



Digitized by Google

Sec. I.

English Literature under the Norman and Angevin Kings.

from Pope to hedge-priest, is painted as busy in the chase for gain; what escapes the bishop is snapped up by the archdeacon, what escapes the archdeacon is nosed and hunted down by the dean, while a host of minor officials prowl hungrily around these greater marauders. Out of the crowd of figures which fills the canvas of the satirist, pluralist vicars, abbots "purple as their wines," monks feeding and chattering together like parrots in the refectory, rises the Philistine Bishop, light of purpose, void of conscience, lost in sensuality, drunken, unchaste, the Goliath who sums up the enormities of all, and against whose forehead this new David slings his sharp pebble of the brook. Powerless to hold the wine-cup, Goliath trolls out the famous drinking-song that a hundred translations have made familiar to us:—

> "Die I must, but let me die drinking in an inn!
> Hold the wine-cup to my lips sparkling from the bin!
> So, when angels flutter down to take me from my sin,
> 'Ah, God have mercy on this sot,' the cherubs will begin!"

**Gerald de Barri.**

The spirit of criticism which assailed in Walter the ecclesiastical system of the day, ventured in Gerald de Barri to attack its system of civil government. Gerald is the father of our popular literature, as he is the originator of the political and ecclesiastical pamphlet. Welsh blood (as his usual name of Giraldus Cambrensis implies) mixed with Norman in his veins, and something of the restless Celtic fire runs alike through his writings and his life. A busy scholar at Paris, a reforming archdeacon in Wales, the wittiest of Court chaplains, the most troublesome of bishops, Gerald became the gayest and most amusing of all the authors of his time. In his hands the stately Latin tongue took the vivacity and picturesqueness of the jongleur's verse. Reared as he had been in classical studies, he threw pedantry contemptuously aside. "It is better to be dumb than not to be understood," is his characteristic apology for the novelty of his style: "new times require new fashions, and so I have thrown utterly aside the old and dry method of some authors, and aimed at adopting the fashion of speech which is actually in vogue to-day." His tract on the conquest of Ireland and his account of Wales, which are in fact reports of two journeys undertaken in those countries with John and Archbishop Baldwin, illustrate his rapid faculty of careless observation, his audacity, and his good sense. They are just the sort of lively, dashing letters that we find in the correspondence of a modern journal. There is the same modern tone in his political pamphlets; his profusion of jests, his fund of anecdote, the aptness of his quotations, his natural shrewdness and critical acumen, the clearness and vivacity of his style, are backed by a fearlessness and impetuosity that made him a dangerous assailant even to such a ruler as Henry the Second. The invectives in which Gerald poured out his resentment against the Angevins are the cause of half the scandal about Henry and his sons which has found its way

Digitized by Google

into history. His life was wasted in an ineffectual struggle to secure the see of St. David's, but the pungent pen of the pamphleteer played its part in rousing the spirit of the nation to its struggle with the crown.

**Revival of the English tongue.**

It is only, however, as the writings of Englishmen that Latin or French works like these can be claimed as part of English literature. Banished from Court by the Conquest, superseded in legal documents by Latin, the English tongue ceased to be literary. The spoken tongue of the nation at large remained of course English as before; William himself had tried to learn it, that he might administer justice to his subjects; but, like all popular dialects when freed from the control of a written literature, it tended to lose its grammatical complexities of gender and inflexion, while a few new words crept in from the language of the conquerors. One great monument indeed of English prose, the English Chronicle itself, lingered on in the Abbey of Peterborough, but it died out amidst the miseries of Stephen's reign, and as a written language English was silent for more than half a century. Its revival coincides with the loss of Normandy and the return of John to his island realm. "There was a priest in the land whose name was Layamon; he was son of Leovenath: may the Lord be gracious to him! He dwelt at Earnley, a noble church on the bank of Severn (good it seemed to him!) near Radstone, where he read books. It came in mind to him and in his chiefest thought that he would tell the noble deeds of England, what the men were named, and whence they came, who first had English land." Journeying far and wide over the land, the priest of Earnley found Bæda and Wace, the books too of S. Albin and S. Austin. "Layamon laid down these books and turned the leaves; he beheld them lovingly: may the Lord be merciful to him! Pen he took with fingers and wrote a book-skin, and the true word set together and compressed the three books into one." Layamon's church is now Areley, near Bewdley, in Worcestershire; his poem was in fact an amplified "Brut," with insertions from Bæda. Historically it is worthless, but as a monument of our language it is beyond all price. After a sleep of half a century English woke up unchanged. In more than thirty thousand lines less than fifty Norman words are to be found. Even the old poetic tradition remains the same; the alliterative metre of the earlier verse is only slightly affected by rhyme, the similes are the few natural similes of Cædmon, the battles are painted with the same rough, simple joy. It is by no mere accident that the English tongue thus wakes again into written life on the eve of the great struggle between the nation and its King. The artificial forms imposed by the Conquest were falling away from the people as from its literature, and a new England, quickened by the Celtic vivacity of de Map and the Norman daring of Gerald, stood forth to its conflict with John.

1200.

*Layamon.*

Digitized by Google

SEC. II.

JOHN. 1204-1215.

## Section II.—John, 1204-1215.

[*Authorities.*—Our chief source of information is the "Chronicle of Roger of Wendover," the first of the S. Alban's annalists, whose work was subsequently revised and continued in a more patriotic tone by another monk of the same abbey, Matthew Paris. The Annals of Waverley, Dunstable, and Burton are all important for the period. The great series of the Royal Rolls, patent and other, begin now to be of the highest value. The French authorities as before. For Langton, see Hook's biography in the "Lives of the Archbishops." The best modern account of this reign is in Mr. Pearson's "History of England," vol. ii.]

**John.**

"Foul as it is, hell itself is defiled by the fouler presence of John." The terrible verdict of the King's contemporaries has passed into the sober judgment of history. Externally John possessed all the quickness, the vivacity, the cleverness, the good-humour, the social charm which distinguished his house. He was fond of books and learned men, he was the friend of Gerald as he was the student of Pliny. He had a strange gift of attracting friends and of winning the love of women. But in his inner soul John was the worst outcome of the Angevins. He united into one mass of wickedness their insolence, their selfishness, their unbridled lust, their cruelty and tyranny, their shamelessness, their superstition, their cynical indifference to honour or truth. In mere boyhood he had torn with brutal levity the beards of the Irish chieftains who came to own him as their lord. His ingratitude and perfidy had brought down his father's hairs with sorrow to the grave. To his brother he had been the worst of traitors. All Christendom believed him to be the murderer of his nephew, Arthur of Brittany. He had abandoned one wife and was faithless to another. His punishments were refinements of cruelty, the starvation of children, the crushing old men under copes of lead. His court was a brothel where no woman was safe from the royal lust, and where his cynicism loved to publish the news of his victims' shame. He was as craven in his superstition as he was daring in his impiety. He scoffed at priests and turned his back on the mass, even amidst the solemnities of his coronation, but he never stirred on a journey without hanging relics round his neck. But with the supreme wickedness of his race he inherited its profound ability. His plan for the relief of Château Gaillard, the rapid march by which he shattered Arthur's hopes at Mirabeau, showed an inborn genius for war. In the rapidity and breadth of his political combinations he far surpassed the statesmen of his time. Throughout his reign we see him quick to discern the difficulties of his position, and inexhaustible in the resources with which he met them. The overthrow of his continental power only

Digitized by Google

spurred him to the formation of a great league which all but brought Philip to the ground; and the sudden revolt of all England was parried by a shameless alliance with the Papacy. The closer study of John's history clears away the charges of sloth and incapacity with which men tried to explain the greatness of his fall. The awful lesson of his life rests on the fact that it was no weak and indolent voluptuary, but the ablest and most ruthless of the Angevins who lost Normandy, became the vassal of the Pope, and perished in a struggle of despair against English freedom.

**The interdict.**

The whole energies of the King were bent on the recovery of his lost dominions on the Continent. He impatiently collected money and men for the support of the adherents of the house of Anjou, who were still struggling against the arms of France in Poitou and Guienne, and had assembled an army at Portsmouth in the summer of 1205, when his project was suddenly thwarted by the resolute opposition of the Primate and the Earl Mareschal. So completely had both the baronage and the Church been humbled by his father, that the attitude of their representatives indicated the new spirit of national freedom which was rising around the King. John at once braced himself to the struggle. The death of Hubert Walter, a few days after this successful protest, enabled him, as it seemed, to neutralize the opposition of the Church by placing a creature of his own at its head. John de Grey, Bishop of Norwich, was elected by the monks of Canterbury at his bidding and enthroned as Primate. In a previous though informal gathering, however, the convent had already chosen its sub-prior, Reginald, as Archbishop, and the rival claimants hastened to appeal to Rome, but the result of their appeal was a startling one both for themselves and for the King. Innocent the Third, who now occupied the Papal throne, had pushed its claims of supremacy over Christendom further than any of his predecessors: resolved to free the Church of England from the royal tyranny, he quashed both the contested elections, and commanded the monks who appeared before him to elect in his presence Stephen Langton to the archiepiscopal see. Personally, a better choice could not have been made, for Stephen was a man who by sheer weight of learning and holiness of life had risen to the dignity of Cardinal, and whose after career placed him in the front rank of English patriots. But in itself the step was a violent usurpation of the rights both of the Church and of the crown. The King at once met it with defiance, and replied to the Papal threats of interdict if Langton were any longer excluded from his see, by a counter threat that the interdict should be followed by the banishment of the clergy and the mutilation of every Italian he could seize in the realm. Innocent, however, was not a man to draw back from his purpose, and the interdict fell at last upon the land. All worship save that of a few privileged orders, all administration of the Sacrament save that of private baptism, ceased over the

1208.

Digitized by Google

SEC. II.
JOHN.
1204–1215.

length and breadth of the country: the church-bells were silent, the dead lay unburied on the ground. The King replied by confiscating the lands of the clergy who observed the interdict, by subjecting them, in spite of their privileges, to the royal courts, and often by leaving outrages on them unpunished. "Let him go," said John, when a Welshman was brought before him for the murder of a priest, "he has killed my enemy!" Two years passed before the Pope proceeded to the further sentence of excommunication. John was now formally cut off from the pale of the Church; but the new sentence was met with the same defiance as the old. Five of the bishops had fled over sea, and secret disaffection was spreading widely, but there was no public avoidance of the excommunicated King. An Archdeacon of Norwich, who withdrew from his service, was crushed to death under a cope of lead, and the hint was sufficient to prevent either prelate or noble from following his example. Only one weapon now remained in Innocent's hands. An excommunicate king had ceased to be a Christian, or to have claims on the obedience of Christian subjects. As spiritual heads of Christendom, the Popes had ere now asserted their right to remove such a ruler from his throne, and to give it to a worthier than he. It was this right which Innocent asserted in the deposition of John. He proclaimed a crusade against him, and committed the execution of his sentence to Philip of France. John met it with the same scorn as before. His insolent disdain suffered the Roman deacon Pandulf to proclaim his deposition to his very face at Northampton. An enormous army gathered at his call on Barham Down, and the English fleet dispelled all danger of invasion on the part of Philip's forces now assembled on the opposite coast, by crossing the Channel, capturing some ships, and burning Dieppe.

*John's deposition.* 1212.

**The Pope's vassal.**

At the very moment of apparent triumph John suddenly gave way. It was the revelation of a danger at home which shook him out of his contemptuous inaction. From the first he had guarded jealously against any revolt of the baronage during his struggle with the Church; he had demanded the surrender of their children as hostages for their loyalty; he had crushed a rising of the Irish nobles in the midst of the interdict, and foiled by rapid marches the efforts at rebellion which Innocent had stirred up in Scotland and Wales. Barbarous cruelties celebrated his triumph; he drove De Braose, one of the most powerful of the Lords Marchers, to die in exile, while his wife and grandchildren were believed to have been starved to death in the royal prisons. On the nobles who still clung panic-stricken to the court of the excommunicate king, John heaped outrages worse than death. Illegal exactions, the seizure of their castles, the preference shown to foreigners, were small provocations compared wth his attacks on the honour of their wives and daughters. Powerless to resist

Digitized by Google

openly, the baronage plunged almost to a man into secret conspiracies; many promised aid to Philip on his landing, while the King of Scots, with Llewellyn of Wales, were busy in corresponding with the Pope. It was with the proofs of this universal disaffection in his hands that Pandulf summoned John to submit; but the ambition of the King seconded his fears. Vile as he was, he possessed in the highest degree the ability of his race, and in the wide combination he had long been planning against Philip he showed himself superior, as a diplomatist, to Henry himself. The barons of Poitou were already sworn to aid him in the South. He had purchased the alliance of the Count of Flanders in the North. His nephew Otho, the Papal claimant of the Empire, had engaged to bring the knighthood of Germany to his aid. But for the success of this vast combination a reconciliation with the Pope was indispensable, for none of his allies, and least of all Otho, could fight side by side with an excommunicate king. Once resolved on, his submission was effected with a shameless cynicism. Not only did John promise to receive Langton, and to compensate the clergy for their losses, not only did he grovel at the feet of the exiled bishops on their return, but, amidst the wonder and disgust of his Court, he solemnly resigned both crown and realms into the hands of the legate, and received them back again to be held by fealty and homage as a vassal of the Pope.

**The Battle of Bouvines.**

England thrilled at the news with a sense of national shame such as she had never felt before. "He has become the Pope's man," the whole country murmured; "he has forfeited the very name of King; from a free man he has degraded himself into a serf." But as a political measure the success of John's submission was complete. The French army at once broke up in impotent rage, but on its advance towards Flanders five hundred English ships under the Earl of Salisbury fell upon the fleet which accompanied it along the coast, and utterly destroyed it. The great league which John had so long matured at last disclosed itself. The King himself landed in Poitou, rallied its barons round him, crossed the Loire in triumph, and recaptured Angers, the home of his race. At the same time Otho, reinforcing his German army by the knighthood of Flanders and Boulogne, as well as by a body of English mercenaries, invaded France from the north. For the moment Philip seemed lost, and yet on the fortunes of Philip hung the fortunes of English freedom. But in this crisis of her fate France was true to herself and her King; the townsmen marched from every borough to Philip's rescue, priests led their flocks to battle with the sacred banners flying at their head. The two armies met near the bridge of Bouvines, between Lille and Tournay, and from the first the day went against the invaders. The Flemish were the first to fly, then the German centre was overwhelmed by the numbers of the French, last of all the English on the right were

Digitized by Google

SEC. II.
JOHN.
1204–1215.

broken by the fierce onset of the Bishop of Beauvais, who charged mace in hand, and struck the Earl of Salisbury to the ground. The news of this complete overthrow reached John in the midst of his triumphs in the South, and scattered his hopes to the winds. He was at once deserted by the Poitevin *noblesse*, and a precipitate retreat alone enabled him to return, baffled and humiliated, to his island kingdom.

**Stephen Langton.**

It is to the victory of Bouvines that England owes her Great Charter. From the hour of his submission to the Papacy, John's vengeance on the barons had only been delayed till he should return a conqueror from the fields of France. A sense of their danger nerved the nobles to resistance; they refused to follow the King on his foreign campaign till the excommunication were removed, and when it was removed they still refused, on the plea that they were not bound to serve in wars without the realm. Furious as he was at this new attitude of resistance, the time had not yet come for vengeance, and John sailed for Poitou with the dream of a great victory which should lay Philip and the barons alike at his feet. He returned from his defeat to find the nobles no longer banded together in secret conspiracies, but openly united in a definite claim of liberty and law. The author of this great change was the new Archbishop whom Innocent had set on the throne of Canterbury. From the moment of his landing in England, Stephen Langton had assumed the constitutional position of the Primate as champion of the old English customs and law against the personal despotism of the Kings. As Anselm had withstood William the Red, as Theobald had rescued England from the lawlessness of Stephen, so Langton prepared to withstand and rescue his country from the tyranny of John. At his first meeting with the King he called on him to swear to the observance of the laws of the Confessor, a phrase in which the whole of the national liberties were summed up. Churchman as he was, he protested against the royal homage to the Pope; and when John threatened vengeance on the barons for their refusal to sail with him to Poitou, Langton menaced him with excommunication if he assailed his subjects by any but due process of law. Far, however, from being satisfied with resistance such as this to isolated acts of tyranny, it was the Archbishop's aim to restore on a formal basis the older freedom of the realm. In a private meeting of the barons at S. Paul's he produced the Charter of Henry the First, and the enthusiasm with which it was welcomed showed the sagacity with which the Primate had chosen his ground for the coming struggle. All hope, however, hung on the fortunes of the French campaign; it was the victory at Bouvines that broke the spell of terror, and within a few days of the King's landing the barons again met at S. Edmundsbury, and swore on the high altar to demand from him, if needful by force of arms, the observance of Henry's Charter and of the Confessor's Law. At Christmas they presented themselves in arms before

Digitized by Google

the King, and preferred their claim. The few months that followed showed John that he stood alone in the land; nobles and Churchmen were alike arrayed against him, and the commissioners whom he sent to plead his cause at the County Courts brought back the news that no man would help him against the Charter. At Easter the barons again gathered in arms at Brackley, and renewed their claim. "Why do they not ask for my kingdom?" cried John in a burst of passion; but the whole country rose as one man at his refusal. London threw open her gates to the army of the barons, now organized under Robert Fitz-Walter, "the marshal of the army of God and holy Church." The example of the capital was at once followed by Exeter and Lincoln; promises of aid came from Scotland and Wales; the Northern nobles marched hastily to join their comrades in London. With seven horsemen in his train, John found himself face to face with a nation in arms. He had summoned mercenaries and appealed to his liege lord, the Pope; but summons and appeal were alike too late. Nursing wrath in his heart the tyrant bowed to necessity, and summoned the barons to a conference at Runnymede.

### Section III.—The Great Charter, 1215–1217.

[*Authorities.*—The text of the Charter is given by Professor Stubbs, with valuable comments, in his "Documents Illustrated," &c. Mr. Pearson gives a useful analysis of it.]

An island in the Thames between Staines and Windsor had been chosen as the place of conference: the King encamped on one bank, while the barons covered the marshy flat, still known by the name of Runnymede, on the other. Their delegates met in the island between them, but the negotiations were a mere cloak to cover John's purpose of unconditional submission. The Great Charter was discussed, agreed to, and signed in a single day. 1215, *July* 15.

One copy of it still remains in the British Museum, injured by age and fire, but with the royal seal still hanging from the brown, shrivelled parchment. It is impossible to gaze without reverence on the earliest monument of English freedom which we can see with our own eyes and touch with our own hands, the great Charter to which from age to age patriots have looked back as the basis of English liberty. But in itself the Charter was no novelty, nor did it claim to establish any new constitutional principles. The Charter of Henry the First formed the basis of the whole, and the additions to it are for the most part formal recognitions of the judicial and administrative changes introduced by Henry the Second. But the vague expressions of the older charters were now exchanged for precise and elaborate provisions. The bonds of unwritten custom which the older grants did little more

Digitized by Google

SEC. III.

THE GREAT CHARTER.

1215-1217.

than recognize had proved too weak to hold the Angevins; and the baronage now threw them aside for the restraints of written law. It is in this way that the Great Charter marks the transition from the age of traditional rights, preserved in the nation's memory and officially declared by the Primate, to the age of written legislation, of parliaments and statutes, which was soon to come. The Church had shown its power of self-defence in the struggle over the interdict, and the clause which recognized its rights alone retained the older and general form. But all vagueness ceases when the Charter passes on to deal with the rights of Englishmen at large, their right to justice, to security of person and property, to good government. "No freeman," ran the memorable article that lies at the base of our whole judicial system, "shall be seized or imprisoned, or dispossessed, or outlawed, or in any way brought to ruin: we will not go against any man nor send against him, save by legal judgment of his peers or by the law of the land." "To no man will we sell," runs another, "or deny, or delay, right or justice." The great reforms of the past reigns were now formally recognized; judges of assize were to hold their circuits four times in the year, and the Court of Common Pleas was no longer to follow the King in his wanderings over the realm, but to sit in a fixed place. But the denial of justice under John was a small danger compared with the lawless exactions both of himself and his predecessor. Richard had increased the amount of the scutage which Henry II. had introduced, and applied it to raise funds for his ransom. He had restored the Danegeld, or land tax, so often abolished, under the new name of "carucage," had seized the wool of the Cistercians and the plate of the churches, and rated moveables as well as land. John had again raised the rate of scutage, and imposed aids, fines, and ransoms at his pleasure without counsel of the baronage. The Great Charter met this abuse by the provision on which our constitutional system rests. With the exception of the three customary feudal aids which still remained to the crown, "no scutage or aid shall be imposed in our realm save by the common council of the realm;" and to this Great Council it was provided that prelates and the greater barons should be summoned by special writ, and all tenants in chief through the sheriffs and bailiffs, at least forty days before. A number of irregular exactions were abolished or assessed at a fixed rate, the abuses of wardship were reformed, and widows protected against the compulsory marriages to which they had been subjected to the profit of the crown.

**The Charter and the People.**

The rights which the barons claimed for themselves they claimed for the nation at large. The boon of free and unbought justice was a boon for all, but a special provision protected the right of the poor. The forfeiture of the freeman on conviction of felony was never to include his tenement, or that of the merchant his wares, or that of the countryman his wain. The means of actual livelihood were to be left even to

Digitized by Google

the worst. The under-tenants or farmers were protected against all lawless exactions of their lords in precisely the same terms as these were protected against the lawless exactions of the crown. The towns were secured in the enjoyment of their municipal privileges, their freedom from arbitrary taxation, their rights of justice, of common deliberation, of regulation of trade. "Let the city of London have all its old liberties and its free customs, as well by land as by water. Besides this, we will and grant that all other cities, and boroughs, and towns, and ports, have all their liberties and free customs." The influence of the trading class is seen in two other enactments, by which freedom of journeying and trade was secured to foreign merchants, and an uniformity of weights and measures was ordered to be enforced throughout the realm. There remained only one question, and that the most difficult of all; the question how to secure this order which the Charter had established in the actual government of the realm. The immediate abuses were easily swept away, the hostages restored to their homes, the foreigners banished from the country. But it was less easy to provide means for the control of a King whom no man could trust, and a council of twenty-four barons were chosen from the general body of their order to enforce on John the observance of the Charter, with the right of declaring war on the King should its provisions be infringed. Finally, the Charter was published throughout the whole country, and sworn to at every hundred-mote and town-mote by order from the King.

**John and the Charter.**

"They have given me four-and-twenty over-kings," cried John in a burst of fury, flinging himself on the floor and gnawing sticks and straw in his impotent rage. But the rage soon passed into the subtle policy of which he was a master. Before daybreak he had ridden from Windsor, and he lingered for months along the Southern shore, the Cinque Ports and the Isle of Wight, waiting for news of the aid he had solicited from Rome and from the Continent. It was not without definite purpose that he had become the vassal of Rome. While Innocent was dreaming of a vast Christian Empire, with the Pope at its head, to enforce justice and religion on his under-kings, John believed that the Papal protection would enable him to rule as tyrannically as he would. The thunders of the Papacy were to be ever at hand for his protection, as the armies of England are at hand to protect the vileness and oppression of a Turkish Sultan or a Nizam of Hyderabad. His envoys were already at Rome, and Innocent, wroth both at the revolt against his vassal and the disregard of his own position as over-lord, annulled the Great Charter and suspended Stephen Langton from the exercise of his office as Primate. Autumn brought a host of foreign soldiers from over sea to the King's standard, and advancing against the disorganized forces of the barons, John starved Rochester into submission and marched ravaging through the midland counties to the North, while his mer-

Digitized by Google

SEC. III.
THE GREAT CHARTER.
1215-1217.

cenaries spread like locusts over the whole face of the land. From Berwick the King turned back triumphant to coop up his enemies in London, where fresh Papal excommunications fell on the barons and the city. But the burghers set Innocent at defiance. "The ordering of secular matters appertaineth not to the Pope," they said, in words that seem like mutterings of the coming Lollardism; and at the advice of Simon Langton, the Archbishop's brother, bells swung out and mass was celebrated as before. With the undisciplined militia of the country and the towns, however, success was impossible against the trained forces of the King, and despair drove the barons to seek aid from France. Philip had long been waiting the opportunity for his revenge upon John, and his son Lewis at once accepted the crown in spite of Innocent's excommunications, and landed in Thanet with a considerable force. As the barons had foreseen, the French mercenaries who constituted John's host refused to fight against the French sovereign. The whole aspect of affairs was suddenly reversed. Deserted by the bulk of his troops, the King was forced to fall rapidly back on the Welsh Marches, while his rival entered London and received the submission of the larger part of England. Only Dover, under Hubert de Burgh, held out obstinately against Lewis, and John, who by a series of rapid marches had succeeded in distracting the plans of the barons, and relieving Lincoln, now turned southward to rescue the great fortress of the coast. In crossing the Wash, however, his army was surprised by the tide, and his baggage, with the royal treasures, washed away.

**The Earl Mareschal.**

The fever which seized the baffled tyrant in the Abbey of Swineshead was inflamed by a gluttonous debauch, and John entered Newark only to die. His death changed the whole face of affairs, for his son Henry was but a child of ten years old, and the royal authority passed into the hands of one who was to stand high among English patriots, William, the Earl Mareschal. The coronation of the boy-king was at once followed by the solemn acceptance of the Great Charter, and the nobles soon streamed away from the French camp; for national jealousy and suspicions of treason told heavily against Lewis, while the pity which was excited by the youth and helplessness of Henry was aided by a sense of injustice in burthening the child with the iniquity of his father. One bold stroke of the Earl Mareschal decided the struggle. A joint army of Frenchmen and English barons, under the Count of Perche and Robert Fitz-Walter, were besieging Lincoln, when the Earl, suddenly gathering forces from the royal castles, marched to its relief. Cooped up in the steep narrow streets, and attacked at once by the Earl and the garrison, the French fled in hopeless rout; the Count of Perche fell on the field; Robert Fitz-Walter was taken prisoner. A more terrible defeat crushed the remaining hopes of Lewis. Large reinforcements set

*Fair of Lincoln.* 1217.

Digitized by Google

sail from France to his aid, under the escort of Eustace the Monk, a well-known freebooter of the Channel, but in the midst of their voyage a small English fleet, which had set sail from Dover under Hubert de Burgh, fell boldly on their rear. The fight admirably illustrates the naval warfare of the time. From the decks of the English vessels the bowmen of Philip d'Aubeny poured their arrows into the crowded masses on board the transports, others hurled quicklime into their enemies' faces, while the more active vessels crashed with their armed prows into the sides of the French ships. The skill of the mariners of the Cinque Ports decided the day against the larger forces of their opponents, and the fleet of Eustace was utterly destroyed. Earl Marescal now closed in upon London, but resistance was really at an end. By the treaty of Lambeth, Lewis promised to withdraw from England on payment of a sum which he claimed as debt; his adherents were restored to their possessions, the liberties of London and other towns confirmed, and the prisoners on either side restored to liberty. The noble spirit of Earl Mareschal was shown in the wisdom and moderation of the terms of submission, and the expulsion of the stranger left England beneath the rule of a statesman whose love for the Charter was as great as its own.

### Section IV.—The Universities.

[*Authorities.*—Huber, in his "English Universities," has given the outlines of the subject; its details may be found in Anthony Wood's "History of the University of Oxford." I have borrowed much from two papers of my own in "Macmillan's Magazine," on "The Early History of Oxford." For Bacon, see his "Opera Inedita," in the Rolls Series, with Mr. Brewer's admirable introduction, and Dr. Whewell's estimate of him in his History of the Inductive Sciences.]

From the turmoil of civil politics we turn to the more silent but hardly less important revolution from which we may date our national education. It is in the reign of Henry the Third that the English universities begin to exercise a definite influence on the intellectual life of Englishmen. Of the early history of Cambridge we know little or nothing, but enough remains to enable us to trace the early steps by which Oxford attained to its intellectual eminence. The establishment of the great schools which bore the name of Universities was everywhere throughout Europe the special mark of the new impulse that Christendom had gained from the Crusades. A new fervour of study sprang up in the West from its contact with the more civilized East. Travellers like Adelard of Bath brought back the first rudiments of physical and mathematical science

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV. THE UNIVERSITIES.

from the schools of Cordova or Bagdad. The earliest classical revival restored Cæsar and Virgil to the list of monastic studies, and left its stamp on the pedantic style, the profuse classical quotations of writers like William of Malmesbury or John of Salisbury. The scholastic philosophy sprung up in the schools of Paris. The Roman law was revived by the imperialist doctors of Bologna. The long mental inactivity of feudal Europe was broken up like ice before a summer's sun. Wandering teachers like Lanfranc or Anselm crossed sea and land to spread the new power of knowledge. The same spirit of restlessness, of inquiry, of impatience with the older traditions of mankind, either local or intellectual, that had hurried half Christendom to the tomb of its Lord, crowded the roads with thousands of young scholars hurrying to the chosen seats where teachers were gathered together. A new power had sprung up in the midst of a world as yet under the rule of sheer brute force. Poor as they were, sometimes even of a servile race, the wandering scholars who lectured in every cloister were hailed as "masters" by the crowds at their feet. Abelard was a foe worthy of the menaces of councils, of the thunders of the Church. The teaching of a single Lombard was of note enough in England to draw down the prohibition of a King. When Vacarius, probably a guest in the court of Archbishop Theobald, where Beket and John of Salisbury were already busy with the study of the Canon Law, opened lectures on it at Oxford, he was at once silenced by Stephen, then at war with the Church, and jealous of the power which the wreck of the royal authority and the anarchy of his rule had already thrown into its hands.

**Oxford.**

At the time of the arrival of Vacarius Oxford stood in the first rank among English towns. Its town church of S. Martin rose from the midst of a huddled group of houses, girt in with massive walls, that lay along the dry upper ground of a low peninsula between the streams of Cherwell and the upper Thames. The ground fell gently on either side, eastward and westward, to these rivers, while on the south a sharper descent led down across swampy meadows to the city bridge. Around lay a wild forest country, the moors of Cowley and Bullingdon fringing the course of Thames, the great woods of Shotover and Bagley closing the horizon to the south and east. Though the two huge towers of its Norman castle marked the strategic importance of Oxford as commanding the great river valley along which the commerce of Southern England mainly flowed, its walls formed, perhaps, the least element in its military strength, for on every side but the north the town was guarded by the swampy meadows along Cherwell, or by the intricate network of streams into which Isis breaks among the meadows of Osney. From the midst of these meadows rose a mitred abbey of Benedictines, which, with the older priory of S. Frideswide, gave the town some ecclesiastical dignity. The residence of the Earl within its castle, the frequent visits of English kings to a palace without its walls,

Digitized by Google

the presence again and again of important Parliaments, marked its political weight within the realm. The settlement of one of the wealthiest among the English Jewries in the very heart of the town indicated, while it promoted, the activity of its trade. Its burghers were proud of a liberty equal to that of London, while the close and peculiar alliance of the capital promised the city a part almost equal to its own in the history of England. No city better illustrates the transformation of the land in the hands of its Norman masters, the sudden outburst of industrial effort, the sudden expansion of commerce and accumulation of wealth which followed the Conquest. To the west of the town rose one of the stateliest of English castles, and in the meadows beneath the hardly less stately abbey of Osney. In the fields to the north the last of the Norman kings raised his palace of Beaumont. The canons of S. Frideswide reared the church which still exists as the diocesan cathedral, while the piety of the Norman Castellans rebuilt almost all the parish churches of the city, and founded within their new castle walls the church of the Canons of S. George. We know nothing of the causes which drew students and teachers within the walls of Oxford. It is possible that here as elsewhere the new teacher had quickened older educational foundations, and that the cloisters of Osney and S. Frideswide already possessed schools which burst into a larger life under the impulse of Vacarius. As yet, however, the fortunes of the University were obscured by the glories of Paris. English scholars gathered in thousands round the chairs of William of Champeaux or Abelard. The English took their place as one of the "nations" of the French University. John of Salisbury became famous as one of the Parisian teachers. Beket wandered to Paris from his school at Merton. But through the peaceful reign of Henry the Second Oxford was quietly increasing in numbers and repute. Forty years after the visit of Vacarius, its educational position was fully established. When Gerald of Wales read his amusing Topography of Ireland to its students, the most learned and famous of the English clergy were, he tells us, to be found within its walls. At the opening of the thirteenth century Oxford was without a rival in its own country, while in European celebrity it took rank with the greatest schools of the Western world. But to realize this Oxford of the past we must dismiss from our minds all recollections of the Oxford of the present. In the outer aspect of the new University there was nothing of the pomp that overawes the freshman as he first paces the "High," or looks down from the gallery of S. Mary's. In the stead of long fronts of venerable colleges, of stately walks beneath immemorial elms, history plunges us into the mean and filthy lanes of a mediæval town. Thousands of boys, huddled in bare lodging-houses, clustering round teachers as poor as themselves in church porch and house porch, drinking, quarrelling,



Digitized by Google

SEC. IV. THE UNIVERSITIES.

dicing, begging at the corners of the streets, take the place of the brightly-coloured train of doctors and Heads. Mayor and Chancellor struggle in vain to enforce order or peace on this seething mass of turbulent life. The retainers who follow their young lords to the University fight out the feuds of their houses in the streets. Scholars from Kent and scholars from Scotland wage the bitter struggle of North and South. At nightfall roysterer and reveller roam with torches through the narrow lanes, defying bailiffs, and cutting down burghers at their doors. Now a mob of clerks plunges into the Jewry, and wipes off the memory of bills and bonds by sacking a Hebrew house or two. Now a tavern row between scholar and townsman widens into a general broil, and the academical bell of S. Mary's vies with the town bell of S. Martin's in clanging to arms. Every phase of ecclesiastical controversy or political strife is preluded by some fierce outbreak in this turbulent, surging mob. When England growls at the exactions of the Papacy, the students besiege a legate in the abbot's house at Osney. A murderous town and gown row precedes the opening of the Barons' War. "When Oxford draws knife," runs the old rhyme, "England's soon at strife."

**Edmund Rich.**

But the turbulence and stir is a stir and turbulence of life. A keen thirst for knowledge, a passionate poetry of devotion, gathered thousands round the poorest scholar, and welcomed the barefoot friar. Edmund Rich—Archbishop of Canterbury and saint in later days—came, a boy of twelve years old, from the little lane at Abingdon that still bears his name. He found his school in an inn that belonged to the abbey of Eynsham, where his father had taken refuge from the world. His mother was a pious woman of his day, too poor to give her boy much outfit besides the hair shirt that he promised to wear every Wednesday; but Edmund was no poorer than his neighbours. He plunged at once into the nobler life of the place, its ardour for knowledge, its mystical piety. "Secretly," perhaps, at eventide when the shadows were gathering in the church of S. Mary's, and the crowd of teachers and students had left its aisles, the boy stood before an image of the Virgin, and placing a ring of gold upon its finger, took Mary for his bride. Years of study, broken by the fever that raged among the crowded, noisome streets, brought the time for completing his education at Paris, and Edmund, hand in hand with a brother Robert of his, begged his way, as poor scholars were wont, to the great school of Western Christendom. Here a damsel, heedless of his tonsure, wooed him so pertinaciously that Edmund consented at last to an assignation; but when he appeared it was in company of grave academical officials, who, as the maiden declared in the hour of penitence which followed, "straightway whipped the offending Eve out of her." Still true to his Virgin bridal, Edmund, on his return from Paris, became the most popular of Oxford teachers. It is to him that Oxford owes her first

Digitized by Google

introduction to the Logic of Aristotle. We see him in the little room which he hired, with the Virgin's chapel hard by, his grey gown reaching to his feet, ascetic in his devotion, falling asleep in lecture time after a sleepless night of prayer, with a grace and cheerfulness of manner which told of his French training, and a chivalrous love of knowledge that let his pupils pay what they would. "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust," the young tutor would say, a touch of scholarly pride perhaps mingling with his contempt of worldly things, as he threw down the fee on the dusty window-ledge, where a thievish student would sometimes run off with it. But even knowledge brought its troubles; the Old Testament, which with a copy of the Decretals long formed his sole library, frowned down upon a love of secular learning from which Edmund found it hard to wean himself. At last, in some hour of dream, the form of his dead mother floated into the room where the teacher stood among his mathematical diagrams. "What are these?" she seemed to say; and seizing Edmund's right hand, she drew on the palm three circles interlaced, each of which bore the name of one of the Persons of the Christian Trinity. "Be these," she cried, as her figure faded away, "thy diagrams henceforth, my son."

**The Universities and Feudalism.**

The story admirably illustrates the real character of the new training, and the latent opposition between the spirit of the Universities and the spirit of the Church. The feudal and ecclesiastical order of the old mediæval world were both alike threatened by the power that had so strangely sprung up in the midst of them. Feudalism rested on local isolation, on the severance of kingdom from kingdom and barony from barony, on the distinction of blood and race, on the supremacy of material or brute force, on an allegiance determined by accidents of place and social position. The University, on the other hand, was a protest against this isolation of man from man. The smallest school was European, and not local. Not merely every province of France, but every people of Christendom, had its place among the "nations" of Paris or Padua. A common language, the Latin tongue, superseded within academical bounds the warring tongues of Europe. A common intellectual kinship and rivalry took the place of the petty strifes which parted province from province or realm from realm. What the Church and Empire had both aimed at and both failed in, the knitting of Christian nations together into a vast commonwealth, the Universities for a time actually did. Dante felt himself as little a stranger in the "Latin" quarter around Mont St. Genevieve as under the arches of Bologna. Wandering Oxford scholars carried the writings of Wiclif to the libraries of Prague. In England the work of provincial fusion was less difficult or important than elsewhere, but even in England work had to be done. The feuds of Northerner and Southerner which so long disturbed the discipline of Oxford witnessed at any rate to the fact that Northerner and Southerner had at last been



Digitized by Google

SEC. IV. THE UNIVERSITIES.

brought face to face in its streets. And here as elsewhere, the spirit of natural isolation was held in check by the larger comprehensiveness of the University. After the dissensions that threatened the prosperity of Paris in the thirteenth century, Norman and Gascon mingled with Englishmen in Oxford lecture-halls. At a far later time the rebellion of Owen Glyndwyr found hundreds of Welsh scholars gathered round its teachers. And within this strangely mingled mass, society and government rested on a purely democratic basis. The son of the noble stood on precisely the same footing with the poorest mendicant among Oxford scholars. Wealth, physical strength, skill in arms, pride of ancestry and blood, the very basis on which feudal society rested, went for nothing in Oxford lecture-rooms. The University was a state absolutely self-governed, and whose citizens were admitted by a purely intellectual franchise. Knowledge made the "master." To know more than one's fellows was a man's sole claim to be a "ruler" in the schools: and within this intellectual aristocracy all were equal. The free commonwealth of the masters gathered in the aisles of S. Mary's as the free commonwealth of Florence gathered in Santa Maria Novella. All had an equal right to counsel, all had an equal vote in the final decision. Treasury and library were at the complete disposal of the body of masters. It was their voice that named every officer, that proposed and sanctioned every statute. Even the Chancellor, their head, who had at first been an officer of the Bishop, became an elected officer of their own.

**The Universities and the Church.**

If the democratic spirit of the Universities threatened feudalism, their spirit of intellectual inquiry threatened the Church. To all outer seeming they were purely ecclesiastical bodies. The wide extension which mediæval usage gave to the word "orders" gathered the whole educated world within the pale of the clergy. Whatever might be their age or proficiency, scholar and teacher were alike clerks, free from lay responsibilities or the control of civil tribunals, and amenable only to the rule of the Bishop and the sentence of his spiritual courts. This ecclesiastical character of the University appeared in that of its head. The Chancellor, as we have seen, was at first no officer of the University, but of the ecclesiastical body under whose shadow he had sprung into life. He was simply the local officer of the Bishop of Lincoln, within whose immense diocese the University was then situated. But this identification in outer form with the Church only rendered more conspicuous the difference of its spirit. The sudden expansion of the field of education diminished the importance of those purely ecclesiastical and theological studies which had hitherto absorbed the whole intellectual energies of mankind. The revival of classical literature, the rediscovery as it were of an older and a greater world, the contact with a larger, freer life, whether in mind, in society, or in politics, introduced a spirit of scepticism, of doubt, of denial into

Digitized by Google

the realms of unquestioning belief. Abelard claimed for reason the supremacy over faith. The Florentine poets discussed with a smile the immortality of the soul. Even to Dante, while he censures these, Virgil is as sacred as Jeremiah. The imperial ruler in whom the new culture took its most notable form, Frederic the Second, the "World's Wonder" of his time, was regarded by half Europe as no better than an infidel. The faint revival of physical science, so long crushed as magic by the dominant ecclesiasticism, brought Christians into perilous contact with the Moslem and the Jew. The books of the Rabbis were no longer a mere accursed thing to Roger Bacon. The scholars of Cordova were no mere Paynim swine to Adelard of Bath. How slowly and against what obstacles science won its way we know from the witness of Roger Bacon. "Slowly," he tells us, "has any portion of the philosophy of Aristotle come into use among the Latins. His Natural Philosophy and his Metaphysics, with the Commentaries of Averroes and others, were translated in my time, and interdicted at Paris up to the year A.D. 1237, because of their assertion of the eternity of the world and of time, and because of the book of the divinations by dreams (which is the third book, De Somniis et Vigiliis), and because of many passages erroneously translated. Even his logic was slowly received and lectured on. For S. Edmund, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was the first in my time who read the Elements at Oxford. And I have seen Master Hugo, who first read the book of Posterior Analytics, and I have seen his writing. So there were but few, considering the multitude of the Latins, who were of any account in the philosophy of Aristotle; nay, very few indeed, and scarcely any up to this year of grace 1292."

**Roger Bacon.** 1214–1292.

We shall see in a later page how fiercely the Church fought against this tide of opposition, and how it won back the allegiance of the Universities through the begging Friars. But it was in the ranks of the Friars themselves that the intellectual progress of the Universities found its highest representative. The life of Roger Bacon almost covers the thirteenth century; he was the child of royalist parents, who had been driven into exile and reduced to poverty by the civil wars. From Oxford, where he studied under Edmund of Abingdon, to whom he owed his introduction to the works of Aristotle, he passed to the University of Paris, where his whole heritage was spent in costly studies and experiments. "From my youth up," he writes, "I have laboured at the sciences and tongues. I have sought the friendship of all men among the Latins who had any reputation for knowledge. I have caused youths to be instructed in languages, geometry, arithmetic, the construction of tables and instruments, and many needful things besides." The difficulties in the way of such studies as he had resolved to pursue were immense. He was without instruments or means of experiment. "Without mathematical instruments

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV. THE UNIVERSITIES.

no science can be mastered," he complains afterwards, "and these instruments are not to be found among the Latins, and could not be made for two or three hundred pounds. Besides, better tables are indispensably necessary, tables on which the motions of the heavens are certified from the beginning to the end of the world without daily labour, but these tables are worth a king's ransom, and could not be made without a vast expense. I have often attempted the composition of such tables, but could not finish them through failure of means and the folly of those whom I had to employ." Books were difficult and sometimes even impossible to procure. "The scientific works of Aristotle, of Avicenna, of Seneca, of Cicero, and other ancients cannot be had without great cost; their principal works have not been translated into Latin, and copies of others are not to be found in ordinary libraries or elsewhere. The admirable books of Cicero de Republica are not to be found anywhere, so far as I can hear, though I have made anxious inquiry for them in different parts of the world, and by various messengers. I could never find the works of Seneca, though I made diligent search for them during twenty years and more. And so it is with many more most useful books connected with the sciences of morals." It is only words like these of his own that bring home to us the keen thirst for knowledge, the patience, the energy of Roger Bacon. He returned as a teacher to Oxford, and a touching record of his devotion to those whom he taught remains in the story of John of London, a boy of fifteen, whose ability raised him above the general level of his pupils. "When he came to me as a poor boy," says Bacon, in recommending him to the Pope, "I caused him to be nurtured and instructed for the love of God, especially since for aptitude and innocence I have never found so towardly a youth. Five or six years ago I caused him to be taught in languages, mathematics, and optics, and I have gratuitously instructed him with my own lips since the time that I received your mandate. There is no one at Paris who knows so much of the root of philosophy, though he has not produced the branches, flowers, and fruit because of his youth, and because he has had no experience in teaching. But he has the means of surpassing all the Latins if he live to grow old and goes on as he has begun."

The pride with which he refers to his system of instruction was justified by the wide extension which he gave to scientific teaching in Oxford. It is probably of himself that he speaks when he tells us that "the science of optics has not hitherto been lectured on at Paris or elsewhere among the Latins, save twice at Oxford." It was a science on which he had laboured for ten years. But his teaching seems to have fallen on a barren soil. The whole temper of the age was against scientific or philosophical studies. The extension of freedom and commerce, even the diffusion of justice, were opening up

Digitized by Google

practical channels for intellectual energy, more inviting because more immediately profitable than the path of abstract speculation. The older enthusiasm for knowledge was already dying down even at the Universities; the study of law was the one source of promotion, whether in Church or state; theology and philosophy were discredited, literature in its purer forms almost extinct. After forty years of incessant study, Bacon found himself in his own words "unheard, forgotten, buried." He seems at one time to have been wealthy, but his wealth was gone. "During the twenty years that I have specially laboured in the attainment of wisdom, abandoning the path of common men, I have spent on these pursuits more than two thousand pounds, not to mention the cost of books, experiments, instruments, tables, the acquisition of languages, and the like. Add to all this the sacrifices I have made to procure the friendship of the wise, and to obtain well-instructed assistants." Ruined and baffled in his hopes, Bacon listened to the counsels of his friend Grosseteste and renounced the world. He became a mendicant friar of the order of S. Francis, an order where books and study were looked upon as hindrances to the work which it had specially undertaken, that of preaching among the masses of the poor. He had written hardly anything. So far was he from attempting to write, that his new superiors had prohibited him from publishing anything under pain of forfeiture of the book and penance of bread and water. But we can see the craving of his mind, the passionate instinct of creation which marks the man of genius, in the joy with which he seized the strange opportunity which suddenly opened before him. "Some few chapters on different subjects, written at the entreaty of friends," seem to have got abroad, and were brought by one of his chaplains under the notice of Clement the Fourth. The Pope at once invited him to write. Again difficulties stood in his way. Materials, transcription, and other expenses for such a work as he projected, would cost at least £60, and the Pope had not sent a penny. He begged help from his family, but they were ruined like himself. No one would lend to a mendicant friar, and when his friends raised the money it was by pawning their goods in the hope of repayment from Clement. Nor was this all; the work itself, abstruse and scientific as was its subject, had to be treated in a clear and popular form to gain the Papal ear. But difficulties which would have crushed another man only roused Roger Bacon to an almost superhuman energy. In little more than a year, the Annus Mirabilis of English science, the work was done. The "greater work," itself in modern form a closely printed folio, with its successive summaries and appendices in the "lesser" and the "third" works (which make a good octavo more) were produced and forwarded to the Pope within fifteen months.

1267.

**The Opus Majus.**

No trace of this fiery haste remains in the book itself. The "Opus Majus" is alike wonderful in plan and detail. Bacon's main plan, in

Digitized by Google

SEC. I. THE UNIVERSITIES.

the words of Dr. Whewell, is "to urge the necessity of a reform in the mode of philosophizing, to set forth the reasons why knowledge had not made a greater progress, to draw back attention to sources of knowledge which had been unwisely neglected, to discover other sources which were yet wholly unknown, and to animate men to the undertaking by a prospect of the vast advantages which it offered." The development of his scheme is on the largest scale; he gathers together the whole knowledge of his time on every branch of science which it possessed, and as he passes them in review he suggests improvements in nearly all. His labours, both here and in his after works, in the field of grammar and philology, his perseverance in insisting on the necessity of correct texts, of an accurate knowledge of languages, of an exact interpretation, are hardly less remarkable than his scientific investigations. But from grammar he passes to mathematics, from mathematics to experimental philosophy. Under the name of mathematics was included all the physical science of the time. "The neglect of it for nearly thirty or forty years," pleads Bacon passionately, "hath nearly destroyed the entire studies of Latin Christendom. For he who knows not mathematics cannot know any other sciences; and what is more, he cannot discover his own ignorance or find its proper remedies." Geography, chronology, arithmetic, music, are brought into something of scientific form, and the same rapid examination is devoted to the question of climate, to hydrography, geography, and astrology. The subject of optics, his own especial study, is treated with greater fulness; he enters into the question of the anatomy of the eye, besides discussing the problems which lie more strictly within the province of optical science. In a word, the "Greater Work," to borrow the phrase of Dr. Whewell, is "at once the Encyclopædia and the Novum Organum of the thirteenth century." The whole of the after works of Roger Bacon—and treatise after treatise have of late been disentombed from our libraries—are but developments in detail of the magnificent conception he had laid before Clement. Such a work was its own great reward. From the world around Roger Bacon could look for, and found, small recognition. No word of acknowledgment seems to have reached its author from the Pope. If we may credit a more recent story, his writings only gained him a prison from his order. "Unheard, forgotten, buried," the old man died as he had lived, and it has been reserved for later ages to roll away the obscurity that had gathered round his memory, and to place first in the great roll of modern science the name of Roger Bacon.

Digitized by Google

## Section V.—Henry the Third, 1217—1257.

[*Authorities.*—The two great authorities for this period are the historiographers of S. Albans, Roger of Wendover, whose work ends in 1235, and his editor and continuator Matthew Paris. The first is full but inaccurate, and with strong royal and ecclesiastical sympathies: of the character of Matthew, I have spoken at the close of the present section. The Chronicles of Dunstable, Waverley, and Burton (published in Mr. Luard's "Annales Monastici") supply many details. The "Royal Letters," edited by Dr. Shirley, with an admirable preface, are, like the Patent and Close Rolls, of the highest value. For opposition to Rome, see "Grosseteste's Letters," edited by Mr. Luard.]

---

**Hubert de Burgh**

The death of the Earl Mareschal left the direction of affairs in the hands of Hubert de Burgh. It was an age of transition, and the temper of the new Justiciary was eminently transitional. Bred in the school of Henry the Second, he had little sympathy with the Charter or national freedom; his conception of good government, like that of his master, lay in a wise personal administration, in the preservation of order and law; but he combined with this a thoroughly English desire for national independence, a hatred of foreigners, and a reluctance to waste English blood and treasure in Continental struggles. Able as he proved himself, his task was one of no common difficulty. He was hampered by the constant interference of Rome. A Papal legate resided at the English court, and claimed a share in the administration of the realm as the representative of its over-lord and as the guardian of the young sovereign. A foreign party, too, was still established in the kingdom, and the Court remained eager to plunge into foreign wars for the recovery of its lost domains. But it was with the general anarchy that Hubert had first to deal. From the time of the Conquest the centre of England had been covered with the domains of great houses, whose longings were for feudal independence, and whose spirit of revolt had been held in check, partly by the stern rule of the Kings, and partly by their creation of a baronage sprung from the Court and settled for the most part in the North, the "new men" of Henry the First and Henry the Second. The oppression of John united both the older and the newer houses in the struggle for the Charter, but the character of each remained unchanged, and the close of the struggle saw the feudal party break out in their old lawlessness and defiance of the Crown. For a time the anarchy of Stephen's days seemed revived. But the royal power was still great, and it was backed by the strenuous efforts of Stephen Langton. The Earl of Chester, the head of the feudal baronage, who had risen in armed rebellion, quailed before the march of Hubert

Digitized by Google

SEC. V.
HENRY THE THIRD.
1217-1257.

and the Primate's threats of excommunication. A more formidable foe remained in the Frenchman, Faukes de Breauté, the sheriff of six counties, with six royal castles in his hands, and allied both with the rebel barons and Llewelyn of Wales. His castle of Bedford was besieged for two months before its surrender, and the stern justice of
1228. Stephen Langton hung the twenty-four knights and their retainers who formed the garrison before its walls while the lay lords, who would have spared them, were gone to dinner. The blow was effectual; the royal castles were surrendered by the barons, and the land was once more at peace. The services which Stephen Langton rendered to public order were small compared with his services to English freedom. Throughout his life the Charter was the first object of his care. The omission of the articles which restricted the royal power over taxation, without the assent of the great Council, in the Charter which was pub-
1216. lished at Henry's coronation, was doubtless due to the Archbishop's absence and disgrace at Rome, for his return is marked by a second
1217. issue, in which the omission is remedied, while a separate Charter of the Forest was added. No man, for the time to come, was to lose life or limb for taking the royal venison, and the recent extensions of the royal forest were roughly curtailed. The suppression of disorder seems to have revived the older spirit of resistance among the royal ministers; when Langton demanded a fresh confirmation of the
1223. Charter in Parliament at Oxford, William Brewer, one of the King's counsellors, protested that it had been extorted by force, and was without legal validity. "If you loved the King, William," the Primate burst out in anger, "you would not throw a stumbling in the way of the peace of the realm." The King was cowed by the Archbishop's wrath, and at once promised the observance of the Charter. Two years after, its solemn promulgation was demanded by the Arch-
1225. bishop and the barons as the price of a new subsidy, and the great principle that redress of wrongs precedes a grant to the Crown was established as a part of our constitution.

*Langton and the Charter.*

**Hubert's fall.**
*Langton's death.*
1228.

The death of Stephen Langton left Hubert alone in the administration of the kingdom, for the Archbishop had extorted from the Pope the withdrawal of the resident Legate. But every year found the Justiciary at greater variance with Rome and with the temper of the King. In the mediæval theory of the Papacy, the constitution of the Church took the purely feudal form of the secular kingdoms around it, with the Pope for sovereign, bishops for his barons, the clergy for his under vassals. As the King demanded aids and subsidies in case of need from his liege men, so it was believed might the head of the Church from the priesthood. During the ministry of Hubert, the Papacy, exhausted by the long struggle with Frederic the Second, grew more and more extortionate in its demands, till the death of Langton saw them culminate in a demand of a tenth from the whole

Digitized by Google

realm of England. The demand was at once rejected by the baronage, but a threat of excommunication silenced the murmurs of the clergy. Exaction followed exaction, the very rights of the lay patrons were set aside, and presentations to benefices (under the name of "reserves") were sold in the papal market, while Italian clergy were quartered on the best livings of the Church. The general indignation found vent at last in a wide conspiracy; letters from "the whole body of those who prefer to die rather than be ruined by the Romans" were scattered over the kingdom by armed men, the tithes gathered for the Pope and foreign clergy were seized and given to the poor, the papal commissioners beaten, and their bulls trodden under foot. The remonstrances of Rome only revealed the national character of the movement; but as inquiry proceeded, the hand of the minister himself was seen to have been at work. Sheriffs had stood idly by while the violence was done; royal letters had been exhibited by the rioters, and the Pope openly laid the charge of the outbreak on the secret connivance of Hubert de Burgh. The charge came at a time when his purely insular policy had alienated Henry himself from a minister to whom the King attributed the failure of his attempts to regain the foreign dominions of his house. An invitation from the barons of Normandy had been rejected through Hubert's remonstrances, and when a great armament gathered at Portsmouth for a campaign in Poitou, it was dispersed for want of transport or supplies. The young King drew his sword and rushed madly on the Justiciary, whom he charged with treason and corruption by the gold of France, but the influence of Hubert again succeeded in deferring the expedition. The failure of the campaign in the following year, when Henry took the field in Brittany and Poitou, was again laid at the door of the Justiciary, whose opposition had prevented an engagement, and the intrigues of Rome were hardly wanting to procure his fall. He was dragged from a chapel at Brentwood, where he had taken refuge, and a smith was ordered to shackle him. "I will die any death," replied the smith, "before I put iron on the man who freed England from the stranger and saved Dover from France." On the remonstrance of the Bishop of London Hubert was replaced in sanctuary, but hunger compelled him to surrender; he was thrown a prisoner into the Tower, and England was left to the rule of royal favourites and to the weakness and caprice of Henry himself.

1220.

1231.

1232.

1234.

There was a certain refinement in Henry's temper which won him affection even in the worst days of his rule. The abbey church of Westminster, with which he replaced the ruder minster of the Confessor, remains a monument of his artistic taste. He was a patron and friend of artists and men of letters, and himself skilled in the "gay science" of the troubadour. From the cruelty, the lust, the impiety of

Henry III. and the aliens.

Digitized by Google

SEC. V.

HENRY THE THIRD. 1217–1257.

his father he was absolutely free. But he was utterly devoid of the political capacity which had been the characteristic of John, as of his race. His conception of power lay in the display of an empty and profuse magnificence. Frivolous, changeable, impulsive alike in good and evil, false from sheer meanness of spirit, childishly superstitious, we can trace but one strong political drift in Henry's mind, a longing to recover the Continental dominions of his predecessors, to surround himself, like them, with foreigners, and without any express break with the Charter to imitate the foreign character of their rule. The death of Langton, the fall of Hubert de Burgh, enabled him to indulge his preference for aliens, and hordes of hungry Poitevins and Bretons were at once summoned over to occupy the royal castles and fill the judicial and administrative posts about the Court. His marriage with Eleanor

1236. of Provence was followed by the arrival in England of the Queen's uncles: one was enriched by the grant of Richmondshire; the Savoy palace in the Strand still recalls the magnificence of a second, Peter of Savoy, who was raised for a time to the chief place in council; Boniface, a third, was promoted to the highest post in the realm save the crown itself, the Archbishoprick of Canterbury. The young Primate, like his brother, brought with him foreign fashions strange enough to English folk. His armed retainers pillaged the markets. His own archiepiscopal fist felled to the ground the prior of S. Bartholomew-by-Smithfield, who opposed his visitation. London was roused by the outrage, and on the King's refusal to do justice a noisy crowd of citizens surrounded the Primate's house at Lambeth with cries of vengeance. The "handsome archbishop," as his followers styled him, was glad to escape over sea; but the brood of Provençals was soon followed by the arrival of the Poitevin relatives of John's queen, Isabella of Angoulême. Aymer was made Bishop of Winchester; William of Valence received the earldom of Pembroke. Even the King's jester was a Poitevin. 'Hundreds of their dependants followed these great lords to find a fortune in the English realm. Peter of Savoy brought in his train a bevy of ladies in search of husbands, and three English earls who were in royal wardship were wedded by the King to foreigners. The whole machinery of administration passed into the hands of men ignorant and contemptuous of the principles of English government or English law. Their rule was a mere anarchy; the very retainers of the royal household turned robbers, and pillaged foreign merchants in the precincts of the Court; corruption invaded the judicature; Henry de Batt, a justiciary, was proved to have openly taken bribes and to have adjudged to himself disputed estates. Meanwhile the royal treasure was squandered in a frivolous attempt to wrest Poitou

1241–1259. from the grasp of France. The attempt ended in failure and shame. At Taillebourg the forces under Henry fled in disgraceful rout before the French as far as Saintes, and only the sudden illness of Lewis

Digitized by Google

the Ninth and a disease which scattered his army, saved Bourdeaux from the conquerors.

That misgovernment of this kind should have gone on for twenty years unchecked, in defiance of the provisions of the Charter, was owing to the disunion and sluggishness of the English baronage. On the first arrival of the foreigners, Richard, the third Earl Mareschal, had stood forth as their leader to demand the expulsion of the strangers from the royal council, and though deserted by the bulk of the nobles, he had defeated the foreign forces sent against him, released Hubert de Burgh, and forced the King to treat for peace. At this critical moment, however, the Earl fell in an Irish skirmish, 1234. and the barons were left without a head. In the long interval of misrule which followed, the financial straits of the King forced him to heap exaction on exaction. The Forest Laws were used as a means of extortion, sees and abbeys were kept vacant, loans were wrested from lords and prelates, the Court itself lived at free quarters wherever it moved. Supplies of this kind, however, were utterly insufficient to defray the cost of the King's prodigality. A sixth of the royal revenue was wasted in pensions to foreign favourites. The debts of the Crown mounted to four times its annual income. Henry was forced to appeal for aid to the great Council of the realm, and aid was granted on 1237. condition that the King confirmed the Charter. The Charter was confirmed and steadily disregarded; and the resentment of the barons expressed itself in a determined protest and a refusal of further subsidies. 1242. In a few years Henry's necessities drove him to a new appeal, and the growing resolution of the nobles to enforce good government was seen in their offer of a grant on condition that the chief officers 1248. of the Crown were appointed by the great Council. Henry indignantly refused the offer, and sold his plate to the merchants of London. From the Church he encountered as resolute an opposition. The resistance of the Earl Mareschal had been vigorously backed by Edmund Rich, whom we have seen as an Oxford teacher, and who had risen to the Archbishopric of Canterbury. The threats and remonstrances of the Primate had forced the King to an accommodation with the Earl, when his death dashed all hope of reform to the ground. But the policy of John made it easy to bridle the Church by the intervention of the Papacy, and at Henry's request a nuncio now appeared in the realm. The scourge of Papal taxation fell again on the clergy. After vain appeals to Rome and to the King, Archbishop Edmund retired to an exile of despair at Pontigny, and tax-gatherer after tax-gatherer, with powers of excommunication, suspension from orders, and presentation to benefices, descended on the unhappy priesthood. The wholesale pillage kindled a wide spirit of resistance. Oxford gave the signal by hunting the Papal legate, Otho, out of the city, amid cries of "usurer" and "simoniac" from the mob of

Digitized by Google

SEC. V.

HENRY THE THIRD.
1217-1257.

1246.

students. Fulk Fitz-Warenne, in the name of the barons, bade Martin, a Papal collector, begone out of England. "If you tarry three days longer," he added, "you and your company shall be cut to pieces." For a time Henry himself was swept away by the tide of national indignation. Letters from the King, the nobles, and the prelates, protested against the Papal exactions, and orders were given that no money should be exported from the realm. But the threat of interdict soon drove Henry back on a policy of spoliation, in which he went hand in hand with Rome.

Matthew Paris. 1200-1259.

The story of this period of misrule has been preserved for us by an annalist whose pages glow with the new outburst of patriotic feeling which this common oppression of the people and the clergy had produced. Matthew Paris is the greatest, as he is in reality the last, of our monastic historians. The school of S. Albans survived indeed till a far later time, but the writers dwindle into mere annalists whose view is bounded by the abbey precincts, and whose work is as colourless as it is jejune. In Matthew the breadth and precision of the narrative, the copiousness of his information on topics whether national or European, the general fairness and justice of his comments, are only surpassed by the patriotic fire and enthusiasm of the whole. He had succeeded Roger of Wendover as chronicler at S. Albans; and the Greater Chronicle with the abridgment of it which has long passed under the name of Matthew of Westminster, a "History of the English," and the "Lives of the Earlier Abbots," were only a few among the voluminous works which attested his prodigious industry. He was an eminent artist as well as an historian, and many of the manuscripts which are preserved are illustrated by his own hand. A large circle of correspondents—bishops like Grosseteste, ministers like Hubert de Burgh, officials like Alexander de Swinford—furnished him with minute accounts of political and ecclesiastical proceedings. Pilgrims from the East and papal agents brought news of foreign events to his scriptorium at S. Albans. He had access to and quotes largely from state documents, charters, and exchequer rolls. The frequency of the royal visits to the abbey brought him a store of political intelligence, and Henry himself contributed to the great chronicle which has preserved with so terrible a faithfulness the memory of his weakness and misgovernment. On one solemn feast-day the king recognized Matthew, and, bidding him sit on the middle step between the floor and the throne, begged him to write the story of the day's proceedings. While on a visit to S. Albans he invited him to his table and chamber, and enumerated by name two hundred and fifty of the English baronies for his information. But all this royal patronage has left little mark on his work. "The case," as he says, "of historical writers is hard, for if they tell the truth they provoke men, and if they write what is false they offend

Digitized by Google

God." With all the fulness of the school of court historians, such as Benedict or Hoveden, Matthew Paris combines an independence and patriotism which is strange to their pages. He denounces with the same unsparing energy the oppression of the Papacy and the King. His point of view is neither that of a courtier nor of a Churchman, but of an Englishman, and the new national tone of his chronicle is but an echo of the national sentiment which at last bound nobles and yeomen and Churchmen together into an English people.

### Section VI.—The Friars.

[*Authorities.*—Eccleston's Tract on their arrival in England and Adam de Marisco's Letters, with Mr. Brewer's admirable Preface, in the "Monumenta Franciscana" of the Rolls series. Grosseteste's Letters in the same series, edited by Mr. Luard. For a general account of the whole movement, see Milman's "Latin Christianity," vol. iv. caps. 9 and 10.]

---

**England and the Church.**

From the tedious record of misgovernment and political weakness which stretches over the forty years we have passed through, we turn with relief to the story of the Friars.

Never, as we have seen, had the priesthood wielded such boundless power over Christendom as in the days of Innocent the Third and his immediate successors. But its religious hold on the people was loosening day by day. The old reverence for the Papacy faded away before the universal resentment at its political ambition, its ruthless exactions, its lavish use of interdict and excommunication for purely secular ends, its degradation of the most sacred sentences into means of financial extortion. In Italy, the struggle between Rome and Frederick the Second had disclosed a spirit of scepticism which among the Epicurean poets of Florence denied the immortality of the soul, and attacked the very foundations of the faith itself. In Southern Gaul, Languedoc and Provence had embraced the heresy of the Albigenses, and thrown off all allegiance to the Papacy. Even in England, though there were no signs as yet of religious revolt, the indignation of the people against Rome, its ceaseless exactions and monstrous alliance with the tyranny of the Crown, broke out in murmurs which preluded the open defiance of the Lollards. "The Pope has no part in secular matters," had been the reply of London to the interdict of Honorius. When the resistance of an Archbishop of York to the Papal demands was met by excommunication, "the people blessed him the more, the more the Pope cursed him." The noblest among English prelates, Bishop Grosseteste of Lincoln, died at feud with the Roman Court; the noblest of English patriots, Earl Simon of

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE FRIARS.

Montfort, was soon to die beneath its ban. The same loss of spiritual power, the same severance from national feeling, was seen in the English Church itself. Plundered and humiliated as they were by Rome, the worldliness of the bishops, the oppression of their ecclesiastical courts, the disuse of preaching, the decline of the monastic orders into rich landowners, the non-residence and ignorance of the parish priests, robbed the clergy of all spiritual influence. The abuses of the time foiled even the energy of Grosseteste. His constitutions forbid the clergy to haunt taverns, to gamble, to share in drinking bouts, to mix in the riot and debauchery of the life of the baronage. But his prohibitions only witness to the prevalence of the evils they denounce. Bishops and deans were withdrawn from their ecclesiastical duties to act as ministers, judges, or ambassadors. Benefices were heaped in hundreds at a time on royal favourites, like John Mansel. The Popes thrust boys of twelve years old into the wealthiest English livings. Abbeys absorbed the tithes of parishes, and then served them by half-starved vicars. Exemptions purchased from Rome shielded the scandalous lives of canons and monks from all episcopal discipline.

**The Friars.**

To bring the world back again within the pale of the Church was the aim of two religious orders which sprang suddenly to life at the opening of the thirteenth century. The zeal of the Spaniard Dominic was roused at the sight of the lordly prelates who sought by fire and sword to win the Albigensian heretics to the faith. "Zeal," he cried, "must be met by zeal, lowliness by lowliness, false sanctity by real sanctity, preaching lies by preaching truth." His fiery ardour and rigid orthodoxy were seconded by the mystical piety, the imaginative enthusiasm of Francis of Assisi. The life of Francis falls like a stream of tender light across the darkness of the time. In the frescoes of Giotto or the verse of Dante we see him take Poverty for his bride. He strips himself of all, he flings his very clothes at his father's feet, that he may be one with Nature and God. His passionate verse claims the moon for his sister and the sun for his brother, he calls on his brother the Wind, and his sister the Water. His last faint cry was a "Welcome, Sister Death!" Strangely as the two men differed from each other, their aim was the same, to convert the heathen, to extirpate heresy, to reconcile knowledge with orthodoxy, to carry the Gospel to the poor. The work was to be done by the entire reversal of the older monasticism, by seeking personal salvation in effort for the salvation of their fellow-men, by exchanging the solitary of the cloister for the preacher, the monk for the friar. To force the new "brethren" into entire dependence on those among whom they laboured the vow of Poverty was turned into a stern reality; the "Begging Friars" were to subsist on the alms of the poor, they might possess neither money nor lands, the very houses in which they lived were to be held in trust for them by others. The tide of popular enthusiasm which welcomed their appearance swept before

Digitized by Google

it the reluctance of Rome, the jealousy of the older orders, the opposition of the parochial priesthood. Thousands of brethren gathered in a few years round Francis and Dominic, and the begging preachers, clad in their coarse frock of serge, with the girdle of rope round their waist, wandered barefooted as missionaries over Asia, battled with heresy in Italy and Gaul, lectured in the Universities, and preached and toiled among the poor.

**The Friars and the Towns.**

To the towns especially the coming of the Friars was a religious revolution. They had been left for the most part to the worst and most ignorant of the clergy, the mass-priest, whose sole subsistence lay in his fees. Burgher and artisan were left to spell out what religious instruction they might from the gorgeous ceremonies of the Church's ritual or the scriptural pictures and sculptures which were graven on the walls of its minsters. We can hardly wonder at the burst of enthusiasm which welcomed the itinerant preacher, whose fervid appeal, coarse wit, and familiar story brought religion into the fair and the market-place. The Black Friars of Dominic, the Grey Friars of Francis, were received with the same delight. As the older orders had chosen the country, the Friars chose the town. They had hardly landed at Dover before they made straight for London and Oxford. In their ignorance of the road the two first Grey Brothers lost their way in the woods between Oxford and Baldon, and, fearful of night and of the floods, turned aside to a grange of the monks of Abingdon. Their ragged clothes and foreign gestures, as they prayed for hospitality, led the porter to take them for jongleurs, the jesters and jugglers of the day, and the news of this break in the monotony of their lives brought prior, sacrist, and cellarer to the door to welcome them and witness their tricks. The disappointment was too much for the temper of the monks, and the brothers were kicked roughly from the gate to find their night's lodging under a tree. But the welcome of the townsmen made up everywhere for the ill-will and opposition of both clergy and monks. The work of the Friars was physical as well as moral. The rapid progress of population within the boroughs had outstripped the sanitary regulations of the Middle Ages, and fever or plague or the more terrible scourge of leprosy festered in the wretched hovels of the suburbs. It was to haunts such as these that Francis had pointed his disciples, and the Grey Brethren at once fixed themselves in the meanest and poorest quarters of each town. Their first work lay in the noisome lazar-houses; it was amongst the lepers that they commonly chose the site of their houses. At London they settled in the shambles of Newgate; at Oxford they made their way to the swampy ground between the walls and the streams of Thames. Huts of mud and timber, as mean as the huts around them, rose within the rough fence and ditch that bounded the Friary. The order of Francis made a hard fight against the taste for

1221–1226.



Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE FRIARS.

sumptuous buildings and for greater personal comfort which characterized the time. "I did not enter into religion to build walls," protested an English provincial, when the brethren pressed for a larger house; and Albert of Pisa ordered a stone cloister, which the burgesses of Southampton had built for them, to be razed to the ground. "You need no little mountains to lift your heads to heaven," was his scornful reply to a claim for pillows. None but the sick went shod. An Oxford Friar found a pair of shoes one morning, and wore them at matins. At night he dreamt that robbers leapt on him in a dangerous pass between Gloucester and Oxford, with shouts of "Kill, kill!" "I am a friar," shrieked the terror-stricken brother. "You lie," was the instant answer, "for you go shod." The Friar lifted up his foot in disproof, but the shoe was there. In an agony of repentance he woke and flung the pair out of window.

**The Friars and the Universities.**

It was with less success that the order struggled against the passion for knowledge. Their vow of poverty, rigidly interpreted as it was by their founders, would have denied them the possession of books or materials for study. "I am your breviary, I am your breviary," Francis cried passionately to a novice who asked for a psalter. When the news of a great doctor's reception was brought to him at Paris, his countenance fell. "I am afraid, my son," he replied, "that such doctors will be the destruction of my vineyard. They are the true doctors who, with the meekness of wisdom, show forth good works for the edification of their neighbours." At a later time Roger Bacon, as we have seen, was suffered to possess neither ink, parchment, nor books; and only the Pope's injunctions could dispense with the stringent observance of the rule. But while the work of the Friars among the sick and lepers drew them, as we have seen in Bacon's life, to the cultivation of the physical sciences, the popularity of their preaching soon led them to the deeper study of theology. Within a short time after their establishment in England we find as many as thirty readers or lecturers appointed at Hereford, Leicester, Bristol, and other places, and a regular succession of teachers provided at each University. The Oxford Dominicans lectured on theology in the nave of their new church, while philosophy was taught in the cloister. The first provincial of the Grey Friars built a school in their Oxford house, and persuaded Grosteste to lecture there. His influence after his promotion to the see of Lincoln was steadily exerted to secure study among the Friars, and their establishment in the University. He was ably seconded by his scholar, Adam Marsh, or de Marisco, under whom the Franciscan school at Oxford attained a reputation throughout Christendom. Lyons, Paris, and Cologne borrowed from it their professors: it was owing, indeed, to its influence that Oxford now rose to a position hardly inferior to that of Paris itself. The three most profound and original of the schoolmen—Roger Bacon, Duns Scotus,

Digitized by Google

and Ockham—were among its scholars; and they were followed by a crowd of teachers hardly less illustrious in their day, such as Bungay, Burley, and Archbishop Peckham. Theology, which had been almost superseded by the more lucrative studies of the Canon Law, resumed its old supremacy in the schools; while Aristotle—who, as we have seen in the life of Bacon, had been so long held at bay as the most dangerous foe of the mediæval faith—was now turned by the adoption of his logical method into its unexpected ally. It was this very method that led to that "unprofitable subtlety and curiosity" which Lord Bacon notes as the vice of the scholastic philosophy. But "certain it is"—to continue the same great thinker's comment on the Friars—"that if these schoolmen, to their great thirst of truth and unwearied travel of wit had joined variety of reading and contemplation, they had proved excellent lights to the great advancement of all learning and knowledge." What, amidst all their errors, they undoubtedly did, was to substitute the appeal to reason for the mere unquestioning obedience to authority, to insist on the necessity of rigid demonstration and an exacter use of words, and to introduce a clear and methodical treatment of all subjects into discussion.

It is to the new clearness and precision which they gave to scientific inquiry, as well as to the strong popular sympathies which their very constitution necessitated, that we must attribute the influence which the Friars undoubtedly exerted on the coming struggle between the people and the Crown. Their position throughout the whole contest is strongly and clearly marked. The University of Oxford, which had now fallen under the direction of their teaching, stood first in its resistance to Papal exactions and its claim of English liberty. The classes in the towns on whom the influence of the Friars told most directly are steady supporters of freedom throughout the Barons' war. Adam Marsh was the close friend and confidant both of Grosteste and Earl Simon of Montfort.

### Section VII.—The Barons' War, 1258–1265.

[*Authorities.*—At the very outset of this important period we lose the priceless aid of Matthew Paris. He is the last of the great chroniclers; the Chronicles of his successor at S. Alban's, Rishanger (published by the Master of the Rolls), are scant and lifeless jottings, somewhat enlarged for this period by his fragment on the Barons' War (published by Camden Society). Something may be gleaned from the annals of Burton, Melrose, Dunstaple, Waverley, Osney, and Lanercost, the Royal Letters, the (royalist) Chronicle of Wykes, and (for London) the "Liber de Antiquis Legibus." Mr. Blaauw has given a useful summary of the period in his "Barons' War."]

When a thunderstorm once forced the King, as he was rowing on the Thames, to take refuge at the palace of the Bishop of Durham,



Digitized by Google

SEC. VII. THE BARONS' WAR. 1258-1265.

Earl Simon of Montfort, who was a guest of the prelate, met the royal barge with assurances that the storm was drifting away, and that there was nothing to fear. Henry's petulant wit broke out in his reply. "I fear thunder and lightning not a little, Lord Simon," said the King, "but I fear *you* more than all the thunder and lightning in the world."

**Simon of Montfort.**

The man whom Henry dreaded as the future champion of English freedom was himself a foreigner, the son of a Simon de Montfort whose name had become memorable for his ruthless crusade against the Albigensian heretics in Southern Gaul. As second son of this crusader, Simon became possessor of the English earldom of Leicester,

1238. which had passed by marriage to his family, and a secret match with Eleanor, the King's sister and widow of the Earl Mareschal, raised him to kindred with the throne. The baronage, indignant at this sudden alliance with a stranger, rose in a revolt which failed only through the desertion of their head, Earl Richard of Cornwall; while the censures of the Church on Eleanor's breach of a vow of chastity, which she had made at her first husband's death, were hardly averted by a journey

1240–1241. to Rome and a year's crusade in Palestine. Simon returned to find the changeable King alienated from him and to be driven by a burst of royal passion from the realm, but he was soon restored to favour

1248. and appointed Governor of Gascony, where the stern justice of his rule earned the hatred of the disorderly baronage, and the heavy taxation which his enforcement of order made necessary estranged from him the burgesses of Bourdeaux. The complaints of the Gascons brought about an open breach with the King. To Earl Simon's offer of the surrender of his post if the money he had spent in the royal service were, as Henry had promised, repaid him, the King hotly retorted that he was bound by no promise to a false traitor. The Earl at once gave Henry the lie,—"Were he not King he should pay dearly for the insult," he said,—and returned to Gascony, to be soon superseded, and forced to seek shelter in France. The greatness of his reputation was shown in the offer which was made to him in his exile of the regency of France during the absence of St. Lewis at the Crusade. On his refusal he was suffered to return to England and re-enter the royal service.

1253. His character had now thoroughly developed. He had inherited the strict and severe piety of his father; he was assiduous in his attendance on religious services, whether by night or day; he was the friend of Grosteste and the patron of the Friars. In his correspondence with Adam Marsh we see him finding patience under his Gascon troubles in the perusal of the Book of Job. His life was pure and singularly temperate; he was noted for his scant indulgence in meat, drink, or sleep. Socially he was cheerful and pleasant in talk; but his natural temper was quick and fiery, his sense of honour keen, his speech rapid and trenchant. "You shall go or die," we find him replying to William of Valence, when he refused to obey the orders of the

Digitized by Google

barons and quit the realm. But the one characteristic which overmastered all was what men at that time called his "constancy," the firm immoveable resolve which trampled even death under foot in its loyalty to the right. The motto which Edward the First chose as his device, "Keep troth," was far truer as the device of Earl Simon. We see in the correspondence of Friar Adam with what a clear discernment of its difficulties both at home and abroad he "thought it unbecoming to decline the danger of so great an exploit" as the reduction of Gascony to peace and order; but once undertaken, he persevered in spite of the opposition of the baronage, the short-sightedness of the merchant class, the failure of all support or funds from England, and at last the King's desertion of his cause, till the work was done. There is the same steadiness of will and purpose in his patriotism. The letters of Marsh and Grosteste show how early he had learnt to sympathise with the bishop in his struggle for the reform of the Church and his resistance to Rome, and at the crisis of the contest he offers him his own support and that of his associates. He sends to Marsh a tract of Grosteste's on "the rule of a kingdom and of a tyranny," sealed with his own seal. He listens patiently to the advice of his friends on the subject of his household or his temper. "Better is a patient man," writes the honest Friar, "than a strong man, and he who can rule his own temper than he who storms a city." "What use is it to provide for the peace of your fellow-citizens and not guard the peace of your own household?" It was to secure "the peace of his fellow-citizens" that the Earl silently trained himself in the ten years that followed his return to England, and the fruit of his discipline was seen when the crisis came. While other men wavered and faltered and fell away, the enthusiastic love of the people gathered itself round the stern, grave soldier who "stood like a pillar," unshaken by promise or threat or fear of death, by the oath he had sworn.

**The Provisions of Oxford.**

While Simon stood silently by, things went from bad to worse. The Pope still weighed heavily on the Church, and even excommunicated the Archbishop of York for resistance to his exactions. The barons were mutinous and defiant. "I will send reapers, and reap your fields for you," Henry had threatened Earl Bigod of Norfolk, when he refused him aid. "And I will send you back the heads of your reapers," retorted the Earl. Hampered by the provisions of the Charter against arbitrary taxation, and by the refusal of the baronage to grant supplies while grievances were unredressed, the Crown was penniless, yet new expenses were incurred by Henry's acceptance of a papal offer of the kingdom of Sicily in favour of his second son Edmund. Shame had fallen on the English arms, and Edward had been disastrously defeated on the Marches by Llewelyn of Wales. The tide of discontent, which was heightened by a grievous famine, burst its

Digitized by Google

SEC. VII. THE BARONS' WAR. 1258-1265.

bounds when the King seized and sold corn which his brother, Richard of Cornwall, had sent from Germany to relieve the general distress; and the barons repaired in arms to a Great Council summoned at Oxford. The past half-century had shown both the strength and weakness of the Charter: its strength as a rallying-point for the baronage, and a definite assertion of rights which the King could be made to acknowledge; its weakness in providing no means for the enforcement of its own stipulations. Henry had sworn again and again to observe the Charter, and his oath was no sooner taken than it was unscrupulously broken. The barons had secured the freedom of the realm; the secret of their long patience during the reign of Henry lay in the difficulty of securing its administration. It was this difficulty which Earl Simon was prepared to solve. With the Earl of Gloucester he now appeared at the head of the baronage, and demanded the appointment of a committee to draw up terms for the representation of the state. Although half the committee consisted of royal ministers and favourites, it was impossible to resist the tide of popular feeling, and the new royal council named by it consisted wholly of adherents of the barons. In the Provisions of Oxford the Justiciary, Chancellor, and the guardians of the King's castles swore to act only with the advice and assent of this Royal Council. The two first great officers, with the Treasurer, were to give account of their proceedings to it at the end of the year. Annual sheriffs were to be appointed from among the chief tenants of the county, and no fees were to be exacted for the administration of justice in their court. Three parliaments were to assemble every year, whether summoned by the King or no. The "commonalty" was to "elect twelve honest men who shall come to the parliaments and other times when occasion shall be, when the King or his council shall send for them, to treat of the wants of the King and of his kingdom. And the commonalty shall hold as established that which these twelve shall do." A royal proclamation in the English tongue, the first in that tongue which has reached us, ordered the observance of these Provisions. Resistance came only from the foreign favourites, and an armed demonstration drove them in flight over sea. Gradually the Council drew to itself the whole royal power, and the policy of the administration was seen in its prohibitions against any further payments, secular or ecclesiastical, to Rome, in the negotiations conducted by Earl Simon with France, which finally ended in the absolute renunciation of Henry's title to his lost provinces, and in the peace which put an end to the incursions of the Welsh. Within, however, the measures of the barons were feeble and selfish. The further Provisions, published by them under popular pressure in the following year, showed that the majority of them aimed simply at the establishment of a governing aristocracy. All nobles and prelates were exempted from attendance at the sheriff's court, and inquiry was ordered

*Provisions of Oxford, July* 1258.

1259.

Digitized by Google

to be made by what right and warranty men whose fathers were serfs passed themselves off for freemen. It was in vain that Earl Simon returned from his negotiations in France to press for more earnest measures of reform, or that Edward, ever watchful to seize the moment of dissension among the barons, openly supported him; Gloucester with the feudal party was only driven into close alliance with the King, and Henry, procuring a bill of absolution from the Pope, seized the Tower, and by public proclamation ordered the counties to pay no obedience to the officers nominated by the barons.

1261.

Deserted as he was, the Earl of Leicester showed no sign of submission. Driven for the moment into exile, he returned to find the barons again irritated by Henry's measures of reaction, while the death of the Earl of Gloucester removed the greatest obstacle to effective reform. At the Parliament of London a civil war seemed imminent, but against the will of Earl Simon a compromise was agreed on, and the question of the Provisions was referred to the arbitration of King Lewis of France. Mutual distrust, however, prevented any real accommodation. The march of Edward with a royal army against Llewelyn of Wales was viewed by the barons as a prelude to hostilities against themselves; and Earl Simon at once swept the Marches and besieged Dover. His power was strengthened by the attitude of the towns. The new democratic spirit which we have witnessed in the Friars was now stirring the purely industrial classes to assert a share in the municipal administration, which had hitherto been confined to the wealthier members of the merchant guild, and at London and elsewhere a revolution which will be described at greater length hereafter had thrown the government of the city into the hands of the lower citizens. The "communes," as the new city governments were called, showed an enthusiastic devotion to Earl Simon and his cause. The Queen was stopped in her attempt to escape from the Tower by an angry mob, who drove her back with stones and foul words. When Henry attempted to surprise Leicester in his quarters in Southwark, the Londoners burst the gates which had been locked by the richer burghers against him, and rescued him by a welcome into the city. In spite of the taunts of the royalists, who accused him of seeking allies against the nobility in the common people, the popular enthusiasm gave a strength to Earl Simon which enabled him to withstand the severest blow which had yet been dealt to his cause. In the Mise of Amiens, Lewis of France, who had accepted the task of arbitrating between the contending parties, gave his verdict wholly in favour of the King. The Provisions of Oxford were annulled, the appointment and removal of the great officers of state was vested wholly in the Crown, the aliens might be recalled at the royal will, the castles were to be surrendered into Henry's hands. The blow was a hard one, and the decision of Lewis was backed by the excommunications of Rome.

**The struggle with the Crown.**

1263.

*Mise of Amiens. Jan.* 1264.

Digitized by Google

SEC. VII. THE BARONS' WAR. 1258-1265.

Luckily, the French award had reserved the rights of Englishmen to the liberties they had enjoyed before the Provisions of Oxford, and it was easy for Earl Simon to prove that the arbitrary power it gave to the Crown was as contrary to the Charter as to the Provisions themselves. London was the first to reject the decision; its citizens mustered at the call of the town-bell at Saint Paul's, seized the royal officials, and plundered the royal parks. But the royal army had already mustered in great force at the King's summons, and Leicester found himself deserted by baron after baron. Every day brought news of ill. A detachment from Scotland joined Henry's forces, the younger De Montfort was taken prisoner in a sally, Northampton was captured, the King raised the siege of Rochester, and a rapid march of Earl Simon's only saved London itself from a surprise by Edward. Betrayed as he was, the Earl remained firm to his oath. He would fight to the end, he said, even were he and his sons left to fight alone. With an army reinforced by 15,000 Londoners, he marched to the relief of the Cinque Ports, which were now threatened by the King. Even on the march he was forsaken by many of the nobles who followed him. Halting at Flexing in Sussex, a few miles from Lewes, where the royal army was encamped, Earl Simon with the young Earl of Gloucester offered the King compensation for all damage if he would observe the Provisions. Henry's answer was one of defiance, and though numbers were against him the Earl resolved on battle. His skill as a soldier reversed the advantages of the ground; marching at dawn, he seized the heights above the town, and forced the royal army to an attack. His men, with white crosses on back and breast, knelt in prayer while the royal forces advanced. Edward was the first to open the fight; his furious charge broke the Londoners on Leicester's left, and in the bitterness of his hatred he pursued them for four miles, slaughtering three thousand men. He returned to find the battle lost. Crowded in the narrow space with a river in their rear, the royalist centre and left were crushed by Earl Simon; the Earl of Cornwall, now King of the Romans, who, as the mocking song of the victors ran, "makede him a castel of a mulne post" ("he weened that the mill-sails were mangonels" goes on the sarcastic verse), was made prisoner, and Henry himself captured. Edward cut his way into the Priory only to join in his father's surrender.

*Battle of Lewes, May 14, 1264.*

**The fall of Earl Simon.**

The victory of Lewes placed Earl Simon at the head of the state. "Now England breathes in the hope of liberty," sang a poet of the time; "the English were despised like dogs, but now they have lifted up their head and their foes are vanquished." The song announces with almost legal precision the theory of the patriots. "He who would be in truth a king, he is a 'free king' indeed if he rightly rule himself and his realm. All things are lawful to him for the government of his kingdom, but nothing for its destruction. It is one thing to rule

Digitized by Google

according to a king's duty, another to destroy a kingdom by resisting the law." "Let the community of the realm advise, and let it be known what the generality, to whom their own laws are best known, think on the matter. They who are ruled by the laws know those laws best, they who make daily trial of them are best acquainted with them; and since it is their own affairs which are at stake, they will take more care, and will act with an eye to their own peace." "It concerns the community to see what sort of men ought justly to be chosen for the weal of the realm." The constitutional restrictions on the royal authority, the right of the whole nation to deliberate and decide on its own affairs, and to have a voice in the selection of the administrators of government, had never been so clearly stated before. That these were the principles of the man in whose hands victory had placed the realm is plain from the steps he immediately took. By the scheme devised in a parliament which immediately followed the battle of Lewes, the supreme power was to reside in the King, assisted by a council nominated by the Earls of Leicester and Gloucester and the patriotic Bishop of Chichester. In December a new parliament was summoned to Westminster, but the weakness of the patriotic party among the baronage was shown in the fact that only twenty-three earls and barons could be found to sit beside the hundred and twenty ecclesiastics. It was probably the sense of his weakness that forced Earl Simon to fling himself on the towns, and to summon two citizens from every borough. The attendance of delegates from the towns had long been usual in the county courts when any matter respecting their interests was in question; but it was the writ issued by Earl Simon that first summoned the merchant and the trader to sit beside the knight of the shire, the baron, and the bishop in the parliament of the realm. The importance of the step is best realized when we remember the new democratic spirit which through the victory of the "commune" over the wealthier burgher class was now triumphant in the towns. But it is only this great event which enables us to understand the large and prescient nature of Earl Simon's designs. Hardly a few months had passed since the victory of Lewes, and already, when the burghers took their seats at Westminster, his government was tottering to its fall. Dangers from without the Earl had met with complete success; a general muster of the national forces on Barham Down had put an end to the projects of invasion entertained by the mercenaries whom the Queen had collected in Flanders; the threats of France had died away into negotiations; the Papal Legate had been forbidden to cross the Channel, and his bulls of excommunication had been flung into the sea. But the difficulties at home grew more formidable every day. The restraint put upon Henry and Edward jarred against the national feeling of loyalty, and estranged the great masses who always side with the weak. Small as the

*Summons of the Commons to Parliament.*

Digitized by Google

Sec. VII. THE BARONS' WAR. 1258-1265.

patriotic party among the barons had always been, it grew smaller as dissensions broke out over the spoils of victory. The Earl's justice and resolve to secure the public peace told heavily against him. John Giffard left him because he refused to allow him to exact ransom from a prisoner contrary to the agreement made after Lewes. The Earl of Gloucester, though enriched with the estates of the foreigners, resented Leicester's prohibition of a tournament, his naming the wardens of the royal castles by his own authority, and his holding Edward's fortresses on the Welsh marches by his own garrisons. Gloucester's later conduct proves the wisdom of Leicester's precautions. He was already in correspondence with the royal party, and on the escape of Edward from confinement he joined him with the whole of his forces. The moment was a luckless one for Earl Simon, who had advanced along bad roads into South Wales to attack the fortresses of his rebel colleague. Marching rapidly along the Severn, Edward took Gloucester, destroyed the ships by which Leicester hoped to escape to Bristol, and cut him off altogether from England; then turning rapidly to the east, he surprised the younger Simon de Montfort, who was advancing to his father's relief, at Kenilworth, and cut his whole force to pieces. From the field of battle he again turned to meet Earl Simon himself, who had thrown his troops in boats across the Severn, and was hurrying to the junction with his son. Exhausted by a night march on Evesham, the Earl learnt the approach of the royal forces, and pushing his army to the front, rode to a hill to reconnoitre. His eye at once recognized in the orderly advance of his enemies the proof of his own experienced training. "By the arm of St. James," he cried, "they come on in wise fashion, but it was from me that they learnt it." A glance satisfied him of the hopelessness of the struggle. "Let us commend our souls to God," he said, to the little group around him, "for our bodies are the foe's." It was impossible, indeed, for a handful of horsemen with a host of half-armed Welshmen to resist the disciplined knighthood of the royal army. The Earl, therefore, bade Hugh Despencer and the rest of his comrades fly from the field. "If he died," was the noble answer, "they had no will to live." In two hours the butchery was over. The Welsh fled at the first onset like sheep, and were cut ruthlessly down in the cornfields and gardens where they sought refuge. The group around Simon fought desperately, falling one by one till the Earl was left alone. A lance-thrust brought his horse to the ground, but Simon still rejected the summons to yield, till a blow from behind felled him, mortally wounded, to the ground, and with a last cry of "It is God's grace" the soul of the great patriot passed away.

Digitized by Google

# CHAPTER IV.

## THE THREE EDWARDS.

### 1265—1360.

### Section I.—The Conquest of Wales, 1265—1284.

[*Authorities.*—For the general state of Wales, see the "Itinerarium Cambriæ" of Giraldus Cambrensis: for its general history, the "Brut-y-Tywysogion," and "Annales Cambriæ," published by the Master of the Rolls; the Chronicle of Caradoc of Lancarvan, as given in the translation by Powel; and Warrington's "History of Wales." Stephen's "Literature of the Cymry" affords a general view of Welch poetry; the "Mabinogion" have been published by Lady Charlotte Guest. In his essays on "The Study of Celtic Literature," Mr. Matthew Arnold has admirably illustrated the characteristics of the Welch poetry. For English affairs we may add to the authorities used in the last chapter, the jejune Chronicles of Trivet and the later History of Hemingford.]

**The Welch Literature.**

WHILE literature and science after a brief outburst were crushed in England by the turmoil of the Barons' War, a poetic revival had brought into sharp contrast the social and intellectual condition of Wales.

To all outer seeming Wales had in the thirteenth century become utterly barbarous. Stripped of every vestige of the older Roman civilization by ages of bitter warfare, of civil strife, of estrangement from the general culture of Christendom, the unconquered Britons had sunk into a mass of savage herdsmen, clad in the skins and fed by the milk of the cattle they tended, faithless, greedy, and revengeful, retaining no higher political organization than that of the clan, broken by ruthless feuds, united only in battle or in raid against the stranger. But in the heart of the wild people there still lingered a spark of the poetic fire which had nerved it four hundred years before, through Aneurin and Llywarch Hen, to its struggle with the Saxon. At the hour of its lowest degradation the silence of Wales was suddenly broken by a crowd of singers. The new poetry of the twelfth century burst forth, not from one bard or another, but from the nation at large. "In every house," says a shrewd English observer of the time, "strangers who arrived in the morning were entertained till eventide with the talk of maidens and the music of

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.

THE CONQUEST OF WALES. 1265-1284.

the harp." The new enthusiasm of the race found an admirable means of utterance in its tongue, as real a development of the old Celtic language heard by Cæsar as the Romance tongues are developments of Cæsar's Latin, but which at a far earlier date than any other language of modern Europe had attained to definite structure and to settled literary form. No other mediæval literature shows at its outset the same elaborate and completed organization as that of the Welch, but within these settled forms the Celtic fancy plays with a startling freedom. In one of the later poems Gwion the Little transforms himself into a hare, a fish, a bird, a grain of wheat; but he is only the symbol of the strange shapes in which the Celtic fancy embodies itself in the tales or Mabinogi which reached their highest perfection in the legends of Arthur. Its gay extravagance flings defiance to all fact, tradition, probability, and revels in the impossible and unreal. When Arthur sails into the unknown world, it is in a ship of glass. The "descent into hell," as a Celtic poet paints it, shakes off the mediæval horror with the mediæval reverence, and the knight who achieves the quest spends his years of infernal durance in hunting and minstrelsy, and in converse with fair women. The world of the Mabinogi is a world of pure phantasy, a new earth of marvels and enchantments, of dark forests whose silence is broken by the hermit's bell, and sunny glades where the light plays on the hero's armour. Each figure as it moves across the poet's canvas is bright with glancing colour. "The maiden was clothed in a robe of flame-coloured silk, and about her neck was a collar of ruddy gold in which were precious emeralds and rubies. Her head was of brighter gold than the flower of the broom, her skin was whiter than the foam of the wave, and fairer were her hands and her fingers than the blossoms of the wood-anemone amidst the spray of the meadow fountain. The eye of the trained hawk, the glance of the falcon, was not brighter than hers. Her bosom was more snowy than the breast of the white swan, her cheek was redder than the reddest roses." Everywhere there is an Oriental profusion of gorgeous imagery, but the gorgeousness is seldom oppressive. The sensibility of the Celtic temper, so quick to perceive beauty, so eager in its thirst for life, its emotions, its adventures, its sorrows, its joys, is tempered by a passionate melancholy that expresses its revolt against the impossible, by an instinct of what is noble, by a sentiment that discovers the weird charm of nature. Some graceful play of pure fancy, some tender note of feeling, some magical touch of beauty, relieves its worst extravagance. Kalweh's greyhounds, as they bound from side to side of their master's steed, "sport round him like two sea-swallows." His spear is "swifter than the fall of the dewdrop from the blade of reed-grass upon the earth when the dew of June is at the heaviest." A subtle, observant love of nature and natural beauty takes fresh colour from the passionate

Digitized by Google

human sentiment with which it is imbued, sentiment which breaks out in Gwalchmai's cry of nature-love, "I love the birds and their sweet voices in the lulling songs of the wood," in his watches at night besides the fords "among the untrodden grass" to hear the nightingale and watch the play of the sea-mew. Even patriotism takes the same picturesque form; the poet hates the flat and sluggish land of the Saxon; as he loves his own, he tells of "its sea-coast and its mountains, its towns on the forest border, its fair landscape, its dales, its waters, and its valleys, its white sea-mews, its beauteous women." But the song passes swiftly and subtly into a world of romantic sentiment: "I love its fields clothed with tender trefoil, I love the marches of Merioneth where my head was pillowed on a snow-white arm." In the Celtic love of woman there is little of the Teutonic depth and earnestness, but in its stead a childlike spirit of delicate enjoyment, a faint distant flush of passion like the rose-light of dawn on a snowy mountain peak, a playful delight in beauty. "White is my love as the apple blossom, as the ocean's spray; her face shines like the pearly dew on Eryri; the glow of her cheeks is like the light of sunset." But the buoyant and elastic temper of the French trouveur is spiritualized in the Welch singers by a more refined poetic feeling. "Whoso beheld her was filled with her love. Four white trefoils sprang up wherever she trod." The touch of pure fancy removes its object out of the sphere of passion into one of delight and reverence.

It is strange, as we have said, to pass from the world of actual Welch history into such a world as this. But side by side with this wayward, fanciful stream of poesy and romance ran a torrent of intenser song. The old spirit of the earlier bards, their joy in battle, their love for freedom, their hatred of the Saxon, broke out in ode after ode, turgid, extravagant, monotonous, often prosaic, but fused into poetry by the intense fire of patriotism which glowed within it. The rise of the new poetic feeling indeed marked the appearance of a new energy in the long struggle with the English conqueror.

**England and the Welch.**

Of the three Welch states into which all that remained unconquered of Britain had been broken by the victories of Deorham and Chester, two had already ceased to exist. The country between the Clyde and the Dee, which soon became parted into the kingdoms of Cumbria and Strathclyde, had been gradually absorbed by the conquest of Northumbria. West Wales, between the British Channel and the estuary of the Severn, had yielded at last to the sword of Æthelstan. But a fiercer resistance prolonged the independence of the great central portion which alone in modern language preserves the name of Wales. In itself the largest and most powerful of the British kingdoms, it was aided in its struggle against Mercia by the weakness of its assailant, the youngest and least powerful of the English states, as well as by the internal warfare which distracted the energies of the

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.

THE CONQUEST OF WALES. 1265-1284.

invaders. But Mercia had no sooner risen to supremacy among the English kingdoms, than it took the conquest vigorously in hand. Offa tore from Wales the border land between the Severn and the Wye; the raids of his successors carried fire and sword into the heart of the country; and an acknowledgment of the Mercian over-lordship was wrested from the Welch princes. On the fall of Mercia this passed to the West-Saxon kings. The Laws of Howel Dhu own the payment of a yearly tribute by "the prince of Aberfrau" to "the king of London," and three Welch chieftains were among the subject feudatories who rowed Eadgar on the Dee. The weakness of England during her long struggle with the Danes revived the hopes of British independence, and in the midst of the Confessor's reign the Welch seized on a quarrel between the houses of Leofric and Godwine to cross the border and carry their attacks into England itself. The victories of Harold, however, re-asserted the English supremacy; his light-armed troops disembarking on the coast penetrated to the heart of the mountains, and the successors of the Welch prince Gruffydd, whose head was the trophy of the campaign, swore to observe the old fealty and render the old tribute to the English Crown.

1053.

**The Conquest of South Wales.**

A far more desperate struggle began when the wave of Norman conquest broke on the Welch frontier. A chain of great earldoms, settled by William along the border land, at once bridled the old marauding forays. From his county palatine of Chester, Hugh the Wolf harried Flintshire into a desert; Robert of Belesme, in his earldom of Shrewsbury, "slew the Welch," says a chronicler, "like sheep, conquered them, enslaved them, and flayed them with nails of iron." Backed by these greater baronies a horde of lesser adventurers obtained the royal "licence to make conquest on the Welch." Monmouth and Abergavenny were seized and guarded by Norman castellans; Bernard of Neufmarché won the lordship of Brecknock; Roger of Montgomery raised the town and fortress in Powysland which still preserves his name.

1094.

A great rising of the whole people at last recovered some of this Norman spoil. The new castle of Montgomery was burnt, Brecknock and Cardigan were cleared of the invaders, and the Welch poured ravaging over the English border. Twice the Red King carried his arms fruitlessly among the mountains, against enemies who took refuge in their fastnesses till famine and hardship had driven his broken host into retreat. The wiser policy of Henry the First fell back on his father's system of gradual conquest, and a new tide of invasion flowed along the coast, where the land was level and open and accessible from the sea. Robert Fitz-Hamo, the lord of Hereford, had already been summoned to his aid by a Welch chieftain; and by the defeat of Rhys ap Tewdor, the last prince under whom Southern Wales was united, had produced an anarchy which enabled him to land

Digitized by Google

safely on the coast, to sweep the Welch from Glamorgan, and divide it between his soldiery. A force of Flammands and Englishmen followed Richard Strongbow as he landed near Milford Haven, and pushing back the inhabitants settled a "Little England" in the present Pembrokeshire. Traces of the Flemish speech still linger perhaps in the peninsula of Gower, where a colony of mercenaries from Flanders settled themselves at a somewhat later time, while a few daring adventurers followed the Lord of Keymes into Cardiganshire, where land might be had for the asking by any who would "wage war upon the Welch."

**The Lords of Snowdon.**

It was at this moment, when the utter subjugation of the British race seemed close at hand, that the new poetic fire rolled back the tide of invasion, and changed these fitful outbreaks of Welch resistance into a resolute effort to regain national independence. Every fight, every hero, had suddenly its verse. The names of the older bards were revived in bold forgeries to animate the national resistance and to prophesy victory. It was in North Wales that the new spirit of patriotism received its strongest inspiration from this burst of song. Again and again Henry the Second was driven to retreat from the impregnable fastnesses where the "Lords of Snowdon," the princes of the house of Gruffydd ab Conan, claimed supremacy over Wales. Once a cry arose that the King was slain, Henry of Essex flung down the royal standard, and the King's desperate efforts could hardly save his army from utter rout. In a later campaign the invaders were met by storms of rain, and forced to abandon their baggage in a headlong flight to Chester. The greatest of the Welch odes, that known to English readers in Gray's translation as "The Triumph of Owen," is Gwalchmai's song of victory over the repulse of an English fleet from Abermenai. The long reigns of the two Llewelyns, the sons of Jorwerth and of Gruffydd, which all but cover the last century of Welch independence, seemed destined to realize the hopes of their countrymen. The homage which the first succeeded in extorting from the whole of the Welch chieftains placed him openly at the head of his race, and gave a new character to his struggle with the English King. In consolidating his authority within his own domains, and in the assertion of his lordship over the princes of the south, Llewelyn ap Jorwerth aimed steadily at securing the means of striking off the yoke of the Saxon. It was in vain that John strove to buy his friendship by the hand of his daughter Johanna. Fresh raids on the Marches forced the King to enter Wales; but though his army reached Snowdon, it fell back like its predecessors, starved and broken before an enemy it could never reach. A second attack had better success. The chieftains of South Wales were drawn from their new allegiance to join the English forces, and Llewelyn, prisoned in his fastnesses, was at last driven to submit. But the ink of the treaty was hardly dry

1195-1211.

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.

THE CONQUEST OF WALES. 1265-1284.

before Wales was again on fire; the common fear of the English once more united its chieftains, and the war between John and his barons removed all dread of a new invasion. Absolved from his allegiance to an excommunicated King, and allied with the barons under Fitz-Walter—too glad to enlist in their cause a prince who could hold in check the nobles of the border country, where the royalist cause was strongest—Llewelyn seized his opportunity to reduce Shrewsbury, to annex Powys, where the English influence had always been powerful, to clear the royal garrisons from Caermarthen and Cardiganshire, and to force even the Flemings of Pembroke to do him homage.

**Llewelyn ap Jorwerth and the Bards.**

The hopes of Wales rose higher and higher with each triumph of the Lord of Snowdon. The court of Llewelyn was crowded with bardic singers. "He pours," sings one of them, "his gold into the lap of the bard as the ripe fruit falls from the trees." But gold was hardly needed to wake their enthusiasm. Poet after poet sang of "the Devastator of England," the "Eagle of men that loves not to lie nor sleep," "towering above the rest of men with his long red lance," his "red helmet of battle crested with a fierce wolf," "The sound of his coming is like the roar of the wave as it rushes to the shore, that can neither be stayed nor appeased." Lesser bards strung together his victories in rough jingle of rhyme, and hounded him on to the slaughter. "Be of good courage in the slaughter," sings Elidir, "cling to thy work, destroy England, and plunder its multitudes." A fierce thirst for blood runs through the abrupt, passionate verses of the court singers. "Swansea, that tranquil town, was broken in heaps," bursts out a triumphant poet; "St. Clears, with its bright white lands, it is not Saxons who hold it now!" "In Swansea, the key of Lloegria, we made widows of all the wives." "The dread Eagle is wont to lay corpses in rows, and to feast with the leader of wolves and with hovering ravens glutted with flesh, butchers with keen scent of carcases." "Better," closes the song, "is the grave than the life of man who sighs when the horns call him forth to the squares of battle." But even in bardic verse Llewelyn rises high out of the mere mob of chieftains who live by rapine, and boast as the Hirlas-horn passes from hand to hand through the hall that "they take and give no quarter." "Tender-hearted, wise, witty, ingenious," he was "the great Cæsar" who was to gather beneath his sway the broken fragments of the Celtic race. Mysterious prophecies floated from lip to lip, till the name of Merlin was heard along the Seine and the Rhine. Medrawd and Arthur would appear once more on earth to fight over again the fatal battle of Camlan. The last conqueror of the Celtic race, Cadwallon, still lived to combat for his people. The supposed verses of Taliesin expressed the undying hope of a restoration of the Cymry. "In their hands shall be all the land from Brittany to Man: . . . a rumour shall arise that the Germans are moving out of Britain back again to

Digitized by Google

their fatherland." Gathered up in the strange work of Geoffry of Monmouth, these predictions made a deep impression, not on Wales only, but on its conquerors. It was to meet indeed the dreams of a yet living Arthur that the grave of the legendary hero-king at Glastonbury was found and visited by Henry the Second. But neither trick nor conquest could shake the firm faith of the Celt in the ultimate victory of his race. "Think you," said Henry to a Welch chieftain who had joined his host, "that your people of rebels can withstand my army?" "My people," replied the chieftain, "may be weakened by your might, and even in great part destroyed, but unless the wrath of God be on the side of its foe it will not perish utterly. Nor deem I that other race or other tongue will answer for this corner of the world before the Judge of all at the last day save this people and tongue of Wales." So ran the popular rhythm, "Their Lord they will praise, their speech they shall keep, their land they shall lose—except wild Wales." Faith and prophecy seemed justified by the growing strength of the British people. The weakness and dissensions which characterized the reign of Henry the Third enabled Llewelyn ap Jorwerth to preserve a practical independence till the close of his life, when a fresh acknowledgment of the English supremacy was wrested from him by Archbishop Edmund. But the triumphs of his arms were renewed by Llewelyn the son of Gruffyd, whose ravages swept the border to the very gates of Chester, while his fleet intercepted and routed the reinforcements which the English were drawing from Ireland. His conquest of Glamorgan roused the Welch chieftains to swear eternal enmity against the English race, and throughout the Barons' war Llewelyn remained master of Wales. Even at its close the threat of an attack from the now united kingdom only forced him to submission on a practical acknowledgment of his sovereignty. The chieftain whom the English kings had till then scrupulously designated as "Lord of Snowdon," was now allowed the title of "Prince of Wales," and his right to receive homage from the other nobles of his principality was formally allowed.

*Llewelyn ap Gruffyd.* 1246-1283.

1268

Near, however, as Llewelyn seemed to the final realization of his aims, he was still a vassal of the English crown, and the accession of a new sovereign to the throne was at once followed by the demand of his homage. The youth of Edward the First had given little promise of the high qualities which distinguished him as an English ruler. In his earlier manhood he had won general ill-will by the turbulence and disorder of his knightly train; his intrigues in the earlier part of the Barons' war had aroused the suspicions of the King; his faithlessness in the later time had brought about the fatal conflict between the Crown and Earl Simon which ended in the Earl's terrible overthrow. London remembered bitterly his ruthless butchery of her citizens at Lewes, and the reckless pillage at the close

**The Conquest of Wales.**



Digitized by Google

SEC. I.

THE CONQUEST OF WALES.
1265-1284.

of the war with which he avenged an insult offered to his mother. But with the victory of Evesham his character seemed to mould itself into nobler form. It was from Earl Simon, as the Earl owned with a proud bitterness ere his death, that Edward had learned the skill in warfare which distinguished him among the princes of his time. But he had learned from the Earl the far nobler lesson of a self-government which lifted him high above them as a ruler among men. Severing himself from the brutal triumph of the royalist party, he secured fair terms to the conquered, and after crushing the last traces of resistance, cleared the realm of the disorderly bands which the cessation of the war had let loose on the country by leading them to a
1270. crusade in Palestine. His father's death recalled him home to meet at once the difficulty of Wales. During two years Llewelyn rejected the King's repeated summons to him to perform his homage, till Edward's patience was exhausted, and the royal army marched into
1277. North Wales. The fabric of Welch greatness fell at a single blow; the chieftains of the south and centre who had so lately sworn fealty to Llewelyn deserted him to join his English enemies; a fleet from the Cinque Ports reduced Anglesea, and the chief of Snowdon, cooped up in his fastnesses, was forced to throw himself on the royal mercy. With characteristic generosity, his conqueror contented himself with adding to the English dominions the country as far as Conway, and providing that the title of Prince of Wales should cease at Llewelyn's death. A heavy fine which he had incurred was remitted, and Eleanor the daughter of Simon of Montfort, who had been arrested on her way to join him as his wife, was wedded to him at the English court. For four years all was quiet, but a sudden outbreak of his brother David, who had deserted him in the previous war, and whose desertion had been rewarded with an English earldom, roused Llewelyn to a renewal of the struggle. A prophecy of Merlin had announced that when English money became round the Prince of Wales should be crowned at London, and a new coinage of copper money, coupled with the prohibition to break the silver penny into halves and quarters, as had been usual, was supposed to have fulfilled the prediction. In
1282. the campaign which followed the Prince held out in Snowdon with the stubbornness of despair, and the rout of an English detachment which had thrown a bridge across the Menai Straits from Anglesea prolonged the contest into the winter. Terrible, however, as were the sufferings of the English army, Edward's firmness remained unbroken, and rejecting all proposals of retreat he issued orders for the formation of a new army at Caermarthen to complete the circle of investment. The danger drew Llewelyn into Radnorshire, and the last Prince of Wales fell, unrecognized, in a petty skirmish on the banks of the Wye. With him expired the independence of his race. After six months of flight his brother David was arrested and sentenced by the Parliament

Digitized by Google

to a traitor's death. The submission of the lesser chieftains was followed by the building of strong castles at Conway and Caernarvon and the settlement of English barons on the confiscated soil. A wiser instinct of government led Edward to establish trade-guilds in the towns, to introduce the English jurisprudence, to divide the country into shires and hundreds on the English model, and to abolish by the "Statute of Wales" the more barbarous of the Welch customs. His policy of justice and conciliation (for the alleged "massacre of the bards" is a mere fable) accomplished its end, and with the exception of a single rising in Edward's reign the peace of Wales remained unbroken for a hundred years.

## Section II.—The English Parliament, 1283—1295.

[*Authorities.*—The short treatise on the Constitution of Parliament called "Modus tenendi Parliamenti" may be taken as a fair account of its actual state and powers in the fourteenth century. It has been reprinted by Professor Stubbs, in the invaluable collection of Documents which serves as the base of the present section. Sir Francis Palgrave has illustrated the remedial side of our parliamentary institutions with much vigour and picturesqueness in his "History of the English Commonwealth," but his conclusions are often hasty and prejudiced. On all constitutional points from the reign of Edward the First we can now rely on the judgment and research of Mr. Hallam ("Middle Ages").]

**The New England.**

The conquest of Wales marked the adoption of a new attitude and policy on the part of the Crown. From the earliest moment of his reign Edward the First definitely abandoned all dreams of recovering the foreign dominions of his race, to concentrate himself on the consolidation and good government of Britain itself. We can only fairly judge his annexation of Wales or his attempt to annex Scotland if we regard them as parts of the same scheme of national administration to which we owe his final establishment of our judicature, our legislation, our Parliament. The King's English policy, like his English name, are the signs of a new epoch. The long period of national formation has come practically to an end. With the reign of Edward begins modern England, the England in which we live. It is not that any chasm separates our history before it from our history after it, as the chasm of the Revolution divides the history of France, for we have traced the rudiments of our constitution to the first moment of the English settlement in Britain. But it is with these as with our language. The tongue of Ælfred is the very tongue we speak, but in spite of its actual identity with modern English it has to be learnt like the tongue of a stranger. On the other hand, the English of Chaucer is almost as intelligible as our own. In the first the historian and



Digitized by Google

SEC. II. THE ENGLISH PARLIAMENT. 1283-1295.

philologer can study the origin and development of our national speech, in the last a school-boy can enjoy the story of Troilus and Cresside, or listen to the gay chit-chat of the Canterbury Tales. In precisely the same way the laws of Æthelstan or Stephen are indispensable for the right understanding of later legislation, its origin and its development, while the principles of our Parliamentary system must necessarily be studied in the Meetings of Wise Men before the Conquest or barons after it. But the Parliaments which Edward gathered at the close of his reign are not merely illustrative of the history of later Parliaments, they are absolutely identical with those which still sit at St. Stephen's; and a statute of Edward, if unrepealed, can be pleaded in our courts as formally as a statute of Victoria. In a word, the long struggle of the constitution for actual existence has come to an end. The contests which follow are not contests which tell, like those which preceded them, on the actual fabric of our political institutions; they are simply stages in the rough discipline by which England has learnt, and is still learning, how best to use and how wisely to develop the latent powers of its national life, how to adjust the balance of its social and political forces, and to adapt its constitutional forms to the varying conditions of the time. From the reign of Edward, in fact, we are face to face with modern England. Kings, Lords, Commons, the courts of justice, the forms of public administration, our local divisions and provincial jurisdictions, the relations of Church and State, in great measure the framework of society itself, have all taken the shape which they still essentially retain.

**Judicial reforms.**

Much of this great change is doubtless attributable to the general temper of the age, whose special task and object seemed to be that of reducing to distinct form the great principles which had sprung into a new and vigorous life during the century that preceded it. As the thirteenth century had been an age of founders, creators, discoverers, so its successor was an age of lawyers; the most illustrious men of the time were no longer such as Bacon, or Earl Simon, or Francis of Assisi, but men such as St. Lewis of France or Alfonso the Wise, organizers, administrators, framers of laws and institutions. It was to this class that Edward himself belonged. There is no trace of creative genius or originality in his character, but he possessed in a high degree the faculty of organization, and his passionate love of law broke out even in the legal chicanery to which he sometimes stooped. In the judicial reforms to which the earlier part of his reign was devoted we see, if not an "English Justinian," at any rate a clear-sighted man of business, developing, reforming, bringing into distinct shape the institutions of his predecessors. His first step was to define the provinces of the civil and ecclesiastical jurisdictions, by restricting the Bishops' Courts, or Courts Christian, to the cognizance of purely spiritual causes, and of causes like those of perjury, marriage,

Digitized by Google

and testamentary dispositions, which were regarded as of a semi-spiritual nature. The most important court of civil jurisdiction, the Sheriffs' or County Court, remained unchanged, both in the extent of its jurisdiction, and the character of the Sheriff as a royal officer. But a change which told greatly on its powers sprang almost accidentally from the operation of a statute (that of Winchester) which provided for the peace of the realm. To enforce the observance of this act knights were appointed in every shire under the name of Conservators of the Peace, a name which, as the convenience of these local magistrates was more sensibly felt and their powers more largely extended, was changed for that which they still retain, of "Justices of the Peace." The superior courts into which the King's Court had since the great Charter divided itself—those of the King's Bench, Exchequer, and Common Pleas—assumed their present form partly by each receiving a distinct staff of judges, partly by the extinction of the office of the Justiciar, who had till then given them a seeming unity by acting as president in all. Of far greater importance than these changes, which were in fact but the completion of reforms begun long before, was the establishment of an equitable jurisdiction side by side with that of the common law. In his reform of 1178 Henry the Second had broken up the older King's Court, which had till then served as the final Court of Appeal, by the severance of the purely legal judges who had been gradually added to it from the general body of his councillors. The judges thus severed from the Council retained the name and the ordinary jurisdiction of "the King's Court," while all cases in which they failed to do justice were reserved for the special cognizance of the Council itself. To this new final jurisdiction of the King in Council, Edward gave a wide development; his assembly of the ministers, the higher permanent officials, and the law officers of the Crown, reserved to itself in its judicial capacity the correction of all breaches of the law which the lower courts had failed to repress, whether from weakness, partiality, or corruption, and especially of those lawless outbreaks of the more powerful baronage which defied the common authority of the judges. Though regarded with jealousy by Parliament, the jurisdiction of the Council seems to have been steadily exercised through the two centuries which followed; in the reign of Henry the Seventh it took legal and statutory form in the new shape of the Court of Star Chamber, and its powers are still exercised in our own days by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. But at a far earlier date its jurisdiction as a Court of Appeal had given birth to that of the Chancellor. The separate powers of this great officer of State, who had originally acted only as President of the Council when discharging its judicial functions, seems to have been thoroughly established under Edward the First, and considerably extended during the reign of his successor. It is by

*Justices of the Peace.* 1205.

*The three Common Law Courts.*

*The King in Council.*

*The Court of Chancery.*

Digitized by Google

SEC. II.
THE ENGLISH PARLIAMENT.
1283-1295.

remembering the origin of the Court of Chancery that we understand the nature of the powers it gradually acquired. All grievances of the subject, especially those which sprang from the misconduct of government officials or of powerful oppressors, fell within its cognizance, as they had fallen within that of the Royal Council, and to these were added disputes respecting the wardship of infants, dower, rent-charges, or tithes. Its equitable jurisdiction sprang from the defective nature and the technical and unbending rules of the common law. As the Council had given redress in cases where law became injustice, so the Court of Chancery interfered without regard to the rules of procedure adopted by the common law courts, on the petition of a party for whose grievance the common law provided no adequate remedy. An analogous extension of his powers enabled the Chancellor to afford relief in cases of fraud, accident, or abuse of trust, and this side of his jurisdiction was largely extended at a later time through the results of legislation on the tenure of land by ecclesiastical bodies.

**Edward's legislation.**

In legislation, as in his judicial reforms, Edward did little more than renew and consolidate the principles which had been already brought into practical working by Henry the Second. His Statute of Win-

1285. chester followed the precedent of the "Assize of Arms" in basing the preservation of public order on the revival and development of the local system of frank-pledge. Every man was bound to hold himself in readiness, duly armed, for the King's service, or the hue and cry which pursued the felon. Every district was made responsible for crimes committed within its bounds; the gates of each town were required to be closed at nightfall, and all strangers to give an account of themselves to its magistrates. As a security for travellers against sudden attacks from robbers, all brushwood was to be destroyed for a space of two hundred feet on either side the public highway, a provision which illustrates at once the social and physical condition of the country at the time. The same care for the trading classes was

1284. seen in the Statute of Merchants, which provided for the registration of the debts of traders, and for their recovery by distraint of the debtor's goods and the imprisonment of his person. The Statute of Mortmain, which prohibited the alienation of lands to the Church under pain of forfeiture, was based on the Constitutions of Clarendon, but it is difficult to see in it more than a jealousy of the rapid growth of ecclesiastical estates, which, grudged as it was by the baronage, was probably beneficial to the country at large, as military service was rendered by Church fees as rigidly as by lay, while the churchmen were the better landlords. The statute, however, was soon evaded by the ingenuity of lawyers, but it probably checked a process which it could not wholly arrest. We trace the same conservative tendency, the same blind desire to keep things as they were during an age of

1290. rapid transition, in the great land-law which bears the technical

Digitized by Google

name of the Statute "Quia Emptores," It is one of those legislative efforts which mark the progress of a wide social revolution in the country at large. The number of the greater barons was in fact diminishing every day, while the number of the country gentry and of the more substantial yeomanry was increasing with the increase of the national wealth. This increase showed itself in the growing desire to become proprietors of land. Tenants of the greater barons received under-tenants on condition of their rendering them similar services to those which they themselves rendered to their lords; and the baronage, while duly receiving the services in compensation for which they had originally granted their land in fee, saw with jealousy the feudal profits of these new under-tenants, the profits of wardship or of reliefs and the like, in a word the whole increase in the value of the estate consequent on its subdivision and higher cultivation, passing into other hands than their own. To check this growth of a squirearchy, as we should now term it, the statute provided that in any case of alienation the sub-tenant should henceforth hold, not of the tenant, but directly of the superior lord; but its result seems to have been to promote instead of hindering the subdivision of land. The tenant who was compelled before to retain in any case so much of the estate as enabled him to discharge his feudal services to the over-lord of whom he held it, was now enabled by a process analogous to the sale of "tenant-right," to transfer both land and services to new holders.

**The Great Council of the Realm.**

It is to the same social revolution rather than to any political prescience of Edward the First, that we owe our Parliament. Neither the Meeting of the Wise Men before the Conquest, nor the Great Council of the Barons after it, had been in any way representative bodies. The first, which theoretically included all free holders of land, had shrunk at an early time—as we have seen—into a gathering of the earls, the higher nobles, and the bishops, with the officers and thegns of the royal household. Little change was made in the composition of this assembly by the Conquest, for the Great Council of the Norman kings was held to include all tenants who held directly of the Crown, the bishops and greater abbots (whose character as independent spiritual members tended more and more to merge in their position as barons), and the great officers of the Court. But though its composition remained the same, the character of the assembly was essentially altered. From a free gathering of "Wise Men" it sank to a Royal Court of feudal vassals; but though its functions seem to have become almost nominal, and its powers to have been restricted to the sanctioning, without debate or possibility of refusal, all grants demanded from it by the Crown, its "counsel and consent" remained necessary for the legal validity of every great fiscal or political measure, and thus protested effectually against the imperial theories advanced by the lawyers of Henry the Third, theories which

Digitized by Google

SEC. II. THE ENGLISH PARLIAMENT. 1283-1295.

declared all legislative power to reside wholly in the sovereign. It was in fact under Henry the Second that these assemblies became more regular, and their functions more important. The great reforms which marked his reign were issued in the Great Council, and even financial matters were suffered to be debated there. But it was not till the grant of the Great Charter that its powers over taxation were formally recognized, and the principle established that no burthen beyond the customary feudal aids might be imposed "save by the Common Council of the Realm." The same great document first expressly regulated its form. In theory, as we have seen, the assembly consisted of all who held land directly of the Crown. But the same causes which restricted attendance at the Witenagemot to the greater nobles, told on the actual composition of the Council of Barons. While the attendance of the ordinary tenants in chief, the Knights or "Lesser Barons," was burthensome from its expense to themselves, their numbers and their dependence on the higher nobles made it dangerous to the Crown. As early, therefore, as the time of Henry the First we find a distinction recognized between the "Greater Barons," of whom the Council was usually composed, and the "Lesser Barons" who formed the bulk of the tenants of the Crown; but though the attendance of the latter had become rare, their right of attendance remained intact. While enacting that the prelates and greater barons should be summoned by special writs to each gathering of the Council, a remarkable provision of the Great Charter orders a general summons to be issued through the Sheriff to all direct tenants of the Crown. The provision was probably intended to rouse the lesser baronage to the exercise of rights which had practically passed into desuetude, but as the clause is omitted in later issues of the Charter we may doubt whether the principle it embodied ever received more than a very limited application. There are traces of the attendance of a few of the lesser knighthood, gentry perhaps of the neighbourhood where the Assembly was held, in some of its meetings under Henry the Third, but till a late period in the reign of his successor the Great Council practically remained a gathering of the greater barons, the prelates, and the officers of the Crown. The change which the Great Charter had failed to accomplish was now, however, brought about by the social circumstances of the time. One of the most remarkable of these was the steady decrease in the number of the greater nobles. The bulk of the earldoms had already lapsed to the Crown through the extinction of the families of their possessors; of the greater baronies, many had practically ceased to exist by their division among female co-heiresses, many through the constant struggle of the poorer barons to rid themselves of their rank by a disclaimer, so as to escape the burthen of higher taxation and attendance in Parliament which it involved. How far this diminution had gone we may see from the fact

Digitized by Google

that hardly more than a hundred barons sat in the earlier Councils of Edward's reign. But while the number of those who actually possessed the privilege of assisting in Parliament was rapidly diminishing, the numbers and wealth of the "lesser baronage," whose right of attendance had become a mere constitutional tradition, was as rapidly increasing. The long peace and prosperity of the realm, the extension of its commerce, and the increased export of wool, were swelling the ranks and incomes of the country gentry as well as of the freeholders and substantial yeomanry. We have already noticed the growing passion for the possession of land which makes this reign so critical a moment in the history of the English squirearchy; but the same tendency had to some extent existed in the preceding century, and it was a consciousness of the growing importance of this class of rural proprietors which induced the barons to make their fruitless attempt to induce them to take part in the deliberations of the Great Council. But while the barons desired their presence as an aid against the Crown, the Crown itself desired it as a means of rendering taxation more efficient. So long as the Great Council remained a mere assembly of magnates it was necessary for the King's ministers to treat separately with the other orders of the state as to the amount and assessment of their contributions. The grant made in the Great Council was binding only on the barons and prelates who made it; but before the aids of the boroughs, the Church, or the shires could reach the royal treasury, a separate negotiation had to be conducted by the officers of the Exchequer with the reeves of each town, the sheriff and shire-court of each county, and the archdeacons of each diocese. Bargains of this sort would be the more tedious and disappointing as the necessities of the Crown increased in the later years of Edward, and it became a matter of fiscal expediency to obtain the sanction of any proposed taxation through the presence of these classes in the Great Council itself.

**Knights of the shire.**

The effort, however, to revive the old personal attendance of the lesser baronage which had broken down half a century before, could hardly be renewed at a time when the increase of their numbers made it more impracticable than ever; but a means of escape from this difficulty was fortunately suggested by the very nature of the court through which alone a summons could be addressed to the landed knighthood. Amidst the many judicial reforms of Henry or Edward the Shire Court remained unchanged. The haunted mound or the immemorial oak round which the assembly gathered (for the court was often held in the open air) were the relics of a time before the free kingdom had sunk into a shire, and its Meetings of the Wise into a County Court. But save that the King's reeve had taken the place of the King, and that the Norman legislation had displaced the Bishop and set four Coroners by the Sheriff's side, the gathering of the freeholders remained much as of old. The local knighthood, the

Digitized by Google

SEC. II.
THE ENGLISH PARLIAMENT.
1283-1295.

yeomanry, the husbandmen of the county, were all represented in the crowd that gathered round the Sheriff, as, guarded by his liveried followers, he published the King's writs, announced his demand of aids, received the presentment of criminals and the inquests of the local jurors, assessed the taxation of each district, or listened solemnly to appeals for justice, civil and criminal, from all who held themselves oppressed in the lesser courts of the hundred or the soke. It was in the County Court alone that the Sheriff could legally summon the lesser baronage to attend the Great Council, and it was in the actual constitution of this assembly that the Crown found a solution of the difficulty which we have already stated. For the principle of representation by which it was finally solved was coeval with the Shire Court itself. In all cases of civil or criminal justice the twelve sworn assessors of the Sheriff represented the judicial opinion of the county at large. From every hundred came groups of twelve sworn deputies, the "jurors," through whom the presentments of the district were made to the royal officer, and with whom the assessment of its share in the general taxation was arranged. The husbandmen on the outskirts of the crowd, clad in the brown smock frock which still lingers in the garb of our carters and ploughmen, were broken up into little knots of five, a reeve and four assistants, who formed the representatives of the rural townships. If, in fact, we regard the Shire Courts as lineally the descendants of our earliest English Parliaments, we may justly claim the principle of parliamentary representation as among the oldest of our institutions. But it was only slowly and tentatively that this principle was applied to the reconstitution of the Great Council. As early as the close of John's reign there are indications of the approaching change in the summons of "four discreet knights" from every county. Fresh need of local support was felt by both parties in the conflict of the succeeding reign, and Henry and his barons alike summoned knights from each shire "to meet on the common business of the realm." It was no doubt with the same purpose that the writs of Earl Simon ordered the choice of knights in each shire for his famous parliament of 1265. Something like a continuous attendance may be dated from the accession of Edward, but it was long before the knights were regarded as more than local deputies for the assessment of taxation, or admitted to a share in the general business of the Great Council. The statute "Quia Emptores," for instance, was passed in it before the knights who had been summoned could attend. Their participation in the deliberative power of Parliament, as well as their regular and continuous attendance, dates only from the Parliament of 1295. But a far greater constitutional change in their position had already taken place through the extension of electoral rights to the freeholders at large. The one class entitled to a seat in the Great Council was, as we have seen, that of the

Digitized by Google

lesser baronage, and of the lesser baronage alone the knights were in theory the representatives. But the necessity of holding their election in the County Court rendered any restriction of the electoral body physically impossible. The court was composed of the whole body of freeholders, and no sheriff could distinguish the "aye, aye" of the yeoman from the "aye, aye" of the squire. From the first moment, therefore, of their attendance we find the knights regarded not as mere representatives of the baronage, but Knights of the Shire, and by this silent revolution the whole body of the rural freeholders were admitted to a share in the government of the realm.

**Representation of Boroughs.**

The financial difficulties of the Crown led to a far more radical revolution in the admission into the Great Council of representatives from the boroughs. The presence of Knights from each shire was, as we have seen, the recognition of an older right, but no right of attendance or share in the national "counsel and assent" could be pleaded for the burgesses of the towns. On the other hand, the rapid development of their wealth made them every day more important as elements in the national taxation. The towns had long since freed themselves from all payment of the dues or fines exacted by the King, as the original proprietor of the soil on which they had in most cases grown up, by what was called the purchase of the "farm of the borough;" in other words, by the commutation of those uncertain dues for a fixed sum paid annually to the Crown, and apportioned by their own magistrates among the general body of the burghers. All that the Crown legally retained was the right enjoyed by every great proprietor of levying a corresponding taxation on its tenants in demesne under the name of "a free aid," whenever a grant was made for the national necessities by the barons of the Great Council. But the temptation of appropriating the growing wealth of the mercantile class proved stronger than legal restrictions, and we find both Henry the Third and his son assuming a right of imposing taxes at pleasure and without any authority from the Council even over London itself. The burgesses could refuse indeed the invitation to contribute to the "free aid" demanded by the royal officers, but the suspension of their markets or trading privileges soon brought them to submission. Each of these "free aids," however, had to be extorted after a long wrangle between the borough and the officers of the Exchequer; and if the towns were driven to comply with what they considered an extortion, they could generally force the Crown by evasions and delays to a compromise and abatement of its original demands. The same financial reasons, therefore, existed for desiring the presence of their representatives in the Great Council as existed in the case of the shires; but it was the genius of Earl Simon which first broke through the older constitutional tradition, and dared to summon two burgesses from each town to the Parliament of 1265. Time had, indeed, to pass before the large and statesmanlike con-

Digitized by Google

SEC. II.
THE ENGLISH PARLIAMENT.
1283-1295.

ception of the great patriot could meet with full acceptance. Through the earlier part of Edward's reign we find a few instances of the presence of representatives from the towns, but their scanty numbers and the irregularity of their attendance show that they were summoned rather to afford financial information to the Great Council than as representatives in it of an Estate of the Realm. But every year pleaded stronger and stronger for the Earl's conception, and in the Parliament of 1295 that of 1265 found itself at last reproduced. "It was from me that he learnt it," Earl Simon had cried, as he recognized the military skill of Edward's onset at Evesham; "It was from me that he learnt it," his spirit might have exclaimed, as he saw the King gathering at last two burgesses "from every city, borough, and leading town" within his realm to sit side by side with the knights, nobles, and barons of the Great Council. To the Crown the change was from the first an advantageous one. The grants of subsidies by the burgesses in Parliament proved far more profitable than the previous extortions of the Exchequer. The proportion of their grant generally exceeded that of the other estates by a tenth. Their representatives too proved far more compliant with the royal will than the barons or knights of the shire; only on one occasion during Edward's reign did the burgesses waver from their general support of the Crown. It was easy indeed to control them, for the selection of boroughs to be represented remained wholly in the King's hands, and their numbers could be increased or diminished at the King's pleasure. The determination was left to the sheriff, and at a hint from the royal council a sheriff of Wilts would cut down the number of represented boroughs in his shire from eleven to three, or a sheriff of Berks declare he could find but a single borough, that of Wycombe, within the bounds of the county. Nor was this exercise of the prerogative hampered by any anxiety on the part of the towns to claim representative privileges. It was difficult to suspect that a power before which the Crown would have to bow lay in the ranks of soberly clad traders, summoned only to assess the contributions of their boroughs, and whose attendance was as difficult to secure as it seemed burthensome to themselves and the towns who sent them. The mass of citizens took little or no part in their choice, for they were elected in the county court by a few of the principal burghers deputed for the purpose; but the cost of their maintenance, the two shillings a day paid to the burgess by his town as four were paid to the knight by his county, was a burthen from which the boroughs made desperate efforts to escape. Some persisted in making no return to the sheriff till their names from sheer disuse dropped off the Parliament-roll. Some bought charters of exemption from the troublesome privilege. Of the 165 who were summoned by Edward the First, more than a third either took no notice of the writs whatever or ceased to do so after a single compliance with them. During the

Digitized by Google

whole time from the reign of Edward the Third to the reign of Henry the Sixth the sheriff of Lancashire declined to return the names of any boroughs at all within that county, "on account of their poverty." Nor were the representatives themselves more anxious to appear than their boroughs to send them. The busy country squire and the thrifty trader were equally reluctant to undergo the trouble and expense of a journey to Westminster. Legal measures were often necessary to ensure their presence. Writs still exist in abundance such as that by which Walter le Rous is "held to bail in eight oxen and four cart-horses to come before the King on the day specified" for attendance in Parliament. But in spite of obstacles such as these the presence of representatives from the boroughs may be regarded as continuous from the Parliament of 1295. As the representation of the lesser barons had widened through a silent change into that of the shire, so that of the boroughs—restricted in theory to those in royal demesne—seems practically from Edward's time to have been extended to all who were in a condition to pay the cost of their representatives' support. By a change as silent within the Parliament itself we shall soon see the burgess, originally summoned to take part only in matters of taxation, admitted to a full share in the deliberations and authority of the other orders of the State.

**The early Parliaments.**

The admission of the burgesses and knights of the shire to the assembly of 1295 completed the fabric of our representative constitution. The Great Council of the Barons had become the Parliament of the Realm, a parliament in which every order of the state found itself represented, and took part in the grant of supplies, the work of legislation, and the control of government. But though in all essential points the character of Parliament has remained the same from that time to this, there were some remarkable particulars in which this great assembly as it was left by Edward the First differed widely from the present Parliament at St. Stephen's. Some of these differences, such as those which sprang from the increased powers and changed relations of the different orders among themselves, we shall have occasion to consider at a later time. But a difference of a far more startling kind than these lay in the presence of the clergy. If there is any part in the Parliamentary scheme of Edward the First which can be regarded as especially his own, it is his project for the representation of the ecclesiastical order. The King had twice at least summoned its "proctors" to Parliament before 1295, but it was then only that the complete representation of the Church was definitely organized by the insertion of a clause in the writ which summoned a bishop to Parliament requiring the personal attendance of all archdeacons, deans, or priors of cathedral churches, of a proctor for each cathedral chapter, and two for the clergy within his diocese. The clause is repeated in the writs of the present day, but its practical effect was

*Representation of the Clergy.*

Digitized by Google

SEC. II. THE ENGLISH PARLIAMENT. 1283-1295.

foiled almost from the first by the resolute opposition of those to whom it was addressed. What the towns failed in doing the clergy actually did. Even when forced to comply with the royal summons, as they seem to have been forced during Edward's reign, they sat jealously by themselves, and their refusal to vote supplies in any but their own provincial assemblies, or convocations, of Canterbury and York, left the Crown without a motive for insisting on their continued attendance. Their presence, indeed, though still occasionally granted on some solemn occasions, became so pure a formality that by the end of the fifteenth century it had sunk wholly into desuetude. In their anxiety to preserve their existence as an isolated and privileged order, the clergy flung away a power which, had they retained it, would have ruinously hampered the healthy development of the state. To take a single instance, it is difficult to see how the great changes of the Reformation could have been brought about had a good half of the House of Commons consisted purely of Churchmen, whose numbers would have been backed by the weight of property as possessors of a third of the landed estates of the realm. A hardly less important difference may be found in the gradual restriction of the meetings of Parliament to Westminster. The names of the early statutes remind us of its convocation at the most various quarters, at Winchester, Acton Burnell, Northampton, or Oxford. It was at a later time that Parliament became settled in the straggling village which had grown up in the marshy swamp of the Isle of Thorns, beside the palace whose embattled pile towered over the Thames and the great minster which was still rising in Edward's day on the site of the older church of the Confessor. It is possible that, while contributing greatly to its constitutional importance, this settlement of the Parliament may have helped to throw into the background its character as a supreme court of appeal. The proclamation by which it was called together invited "all who had any grace to demand of the King in Parliament, or any plaint to make of matters which could not be redressed or determined by ordinary course of law, or who had been in any way aggrieved by any of the King's ministers or justices or sheriffs, or their bailiffs, or any other officer, or have been unduly assessed, rated, charged or surcharged to aids, subsidies, or taxes," to deliver their petitions to receivers who sat in the Great Hall of the Palace of Westminster. The petitions were forwarded to the King's Council, and it was probably the extension of the jurisdiction of that body, and the subsequent rise of the Court of Chancery, which reduced this ancient right of the subject to the formal election of "Triers of Petitions" at the opening of every new Parliament by the House of Lords, a usage which is still continued. But it must have been owing to some memory of the older custom that the subject always looked for redress against injuries from the Crown or its ministers to the Parliament of the realm.

*Restriction of Parliament to Westminster.*

*Parliament as Court of Appeal.*

Digitized by Google

## Section III.—The Conquest of Scotland, 1290–1305.

[*Authorities.*—Scotland itself has no contemporary chronicles for this period: the Jingle of Blind Harry is two hundred years later than the death of its hero, Wallace. Those of England are meagre and inaccurate; the most important are the "Annales Angliæ Scotiæ" and "Annales Regni Scotiæ," Rishanger's Chronicle, his "Gesta Edwardi Primi," and three fragments of annals (all published by the Master of the Rolls), with the portion of the so-called Walsingham's History which relates to this time, now attributed by its latest editor, Mr. Riley, to Rishanger's hand. Hemingford, though of somewhat later date, adds some interesting details. But the main source of our information lies in the copious collection of state papers preserved in Rymer's "Fœdera," in the "Rotuli Scotiæ," and in the "Documents and Records illustrating the History of Scotland," edited by Sir F. Palgrave. Mr. Robertson, in his "Scotland under her Early Kings," has admirably illustrated the ages before the quarrel, and Mr. Burton in his History of Scotland has stated the quarrel itself with great accuracy and fairness. For Edward's side see the preface of Sir F. Palgrave to the work above, and Mr. Freeman's essay on "The Relations between the Crown of England and Scotland."]

**Edward the First.**

If the personal character of Edward the First had borne but a small part in the constitutional changes which we have described, it becomes of the highest moment during the war with Scotland which covers the latter half of his reign.

In his own time, and amongst his own subjects, Edward was the object of almost boundless admiration. He was in the truest sense a national king. At the moment when the distinction between conquerors and conquered had passed away, and England felt herself once more a people, she saw in her ruler no stranger, but an Englishman. The national tradition returned in more than the golden hair or the English name which linked him to her earlier kings. Edward's very temper was English to the core. In good as in evil he stands out as the typical representative of his race, wilful and imperious as his people, tenacious of his rights, indomitable in his pride, dogged, stubborn, slow of apprehension, narrow in sympathy, but in the main just, unselfish, laborious, conscientious, haughtily observant of truth and self-respect, temperate, reverent of duty, religious. He had inherited the fierce ruthlessness of the Angevins, so that when he punished his punishments were without pity, and a priest who had ventured into his presence with a remonstrance from his order dropped dead from sheer fright at his feet. But for the most part his impulses were generous, trustful, averse from cruelty, prone to forgiveness. "No man ever asked mercy of me," he said in his old age, "and was

Digitized by Google

SEC. III.
THE CONQUEST OF SCOTLAND.
1290-1305.

refused." The rough soldierly nobleness of his nature breaks out at Falkirk, where he lay on the bare ground among his men, or in his refusal during a Welch campaign to drink of the one cask of wine which had been saved from marauders: "It is I who have brought you into this strait," he said to his thirsty fellow-soldiers, "and I will have no advantage of you in meat or drink." A strange tenderness and sensitiveness to affection lay in fact beneath the stern imperiousness of his outer bearing. Every yeoman throughout his realm was drawn closer to the King who wept bitterly at the news of his father's death, though it gave him a crown; whose fiercest burst of vengeance was called out by an insult to his mother; whose crosses rose as memorials of his love and sorrow at every spot where his wife's bier rested. "I loved her tenderly in her lifetime," wrote Edward to Eleanor's friend, the Abbot of Clugny; "I do not cease to love her now she is dead." And as it was with wife and child, so it was with his people at large. All the self-concentrated isolation of the earlier Angevins disappears in Edward. He is the first English king since the Conquest who loves his people with a personal love, and craves for their love back again. To his trust in them we owe our Parliament, to his care for them the great statutes which stand in the forefront of our laws. But even in his struggles with her England understood a temper which was so perfectly her own, and the quarrels between King and people during his reign are quarrels where, fiercely as they fought, neither disputant doubted for a moment the worth or affection of the other. Few scenes in our history are more touching than that which closes the long contest over the Charter, when Edward stood face to face with his people in Westminster Hall, and with a sudden burst of tears owned himself frankly in the wrong.

But it was just this sensitiveness, this openness to outer impressions and outer influences, that led to the strange contradictions which meet us in Edward's career. Under the first king whose temper was distinctly English a foreign influence told most fatally on our manners, our literature, our national spirit. The sudden rise of France into a compact and organized monarchy from the time of Philip Augustus had now made its influence dominant in Western Europe. The "chivalry" so familiar in Froissart, with its picturesque mimicry of high sentiment, of heroism, love, and courtesy—a mimicry before which all depth and reality of nobleness disappeared to make room for the coarsest profligacy, the narrowest caste-spirit, and a brutal indifference to human suffering—was specially of French creation. There was a nobleness in Edward's nature from which the baser influences of chivalry fell away. His life was pure, his piety even when it stooped to the superstition of the time manly and sincere, while his high sense of duty saved him from the frivolous self-indulgence of his successors. But he was far from being wholly free from the taint of his age. His

Digitized by Google

passionate desire was to be a model of the fashionable knighthood of his day. He had been famous from his very youth as a consummate general; Earl Simon had admired the skill of his advance at Evesham, and in his Welsh campaign he had shown a tenacity and force of will which wrested victory out of the midst of defeat. He could head a furious charge of horse at Lewes, or organize a commissariat which enabled him to move army after army across the harried Lowlands. In his old age he was quick to discover the value of the English archery, and to employ it as a means of victory at Falkirk. But his fame as a general seemed a small thing to Edward in comparison with his fame as a knight. He shared to the full his people's love of hard fighting. His frame, indeed, was that of a born soldier—tall, deep-chested, long of limb, capable alike of endurance or action. While fresh from the triumph of Evesham he encountered Adam Gurdon, a famous freebooter, and single-handed forced him to beg for mercy. At the opening of his reign he saved his life by sheer hard fighting in a tournament at Chalons. He was the first sovereign to introduce the sham warfare of the Tournament into England, where it had been rigidly prohibited by his predecessors and forbidden by the Church. We see the frivolous unreality of the new chivalry in his "Round Table" at Kenilworth, where a hundred knights and ladies, "clad all in silk," renewed the faded glories of Arthur's Court. The false air of romance which was soon to turn the gravest political resolutions into outbursts of sentimental feeling appears in his "Vow of the Swan," when, rising at the royal board, the old man swore on the dish before him to avenge on Scotland the murder of Comyn. Chivalry exerted on him a yet more fatal influence in its narrowing of all sympathy to the noble class, and its exclusion of the peasant and the craftsman from all claim to pity. It is the "knight without reproach" who looks calmly on at the massacre of Berwick, and sees in William Wallace nothing but a common robber.

Hardly less powerful than the French notion of chivalry in its influence on Edward's mind was the new French conception of kingship, feudality, and law. The rise of a lawyer class was everywhere hardening customary into written rights, allegiance into subjection, loose ties such as commendation into a definite vassalage. But it was specially through French influence, the influence of St. Lewis and his successors, that the imperial theories of the Roman Law were brought to bear upon this natural tendency of the time. When the "sacred majesty" of the Cæsars was transferred by a legal fiction to the royal head of a feudal baronage, every constitutional relation was radically changed. The "defiance" by which a vassal renounced service to his lord became treason, his after resistance "sacrilege." That Edward could appreciate what was sound and noble in the legal spirit around him was shown in his reforms of our judicature and our Parliament; but there



Digitized by Google

SEC. III.
THE CONQUEST OF SCOTLAND.
1290-1305.

was something even more congenial to his mind in its definiteness, its rigidity, its narrow technicalities. He was never wilfully unjust, but he was captious in his justice, fond of legal chicanery, prompt to take advantage of the letter of the law. He was never wilfully untruthful; his abhorrence of falsehood showed itself in the words of his motto, "Keep Troth," but he kept his troth in the spirit of a peddling attorney. The high conception of royalty which he had borrowed from St. Lewis united with this legal turn of mind in the worst acts of his reign. Of rights or liberties unregistered in charter or roll Edward would know nothing. On the other hand, he was himself overpowered by the majesty of his crown. It was incredible to him that Scotland should revolt against a legal bargain which made her national independence conditional on the terms extorted from a claimant of her throne: nor could he view in any other light but as treason the resistance of his own baronage to an arbitrary taxation which their fathers had borne. It is in the very anomalies of such a character, in its strange union of justice and wrong-doing, of nobleness and meanness, that we must look for the explanation of Edward's conduct and policy in his later years.

**Scotland.**

Fairly to understand his quarrel with the Scots, we must clear our minds of the ideas which we now associate with the words "Scotland," or the "Scotch people." At the opening of the fourteenth century the kingdom of the Scots was an aggregate of at least four distinct countries, each with its different people, its different tongue, its different history. The first of these was the district once called

*Saxony.*

"Saxony," and which now bears the name of the Lowlands, the space, roughly speaking, between the Forth and the Tweed. We have seen that at the close of the English conquest of Britain the kingdom of Northumbria stretched from the Humber to the Firth of Forth, and of this kingdom the Lowlands formed simply the northern portion. The English conquest and the English colonization were as complete here as over the rest of Britain. Rivers and hills indeed retained their Celtic names, but the "tons" and "hams" scattered over the country told the story of its Teutonic settlement. Dodings and Levings left their name to Dodington and Livingston: Elphinston and Edmundston preserved the memory of English Elfins and Edmunds who had raised their homesteads along the Teviot and the Tweed. To the northward and westward of this Northumbrian land lay the kingdoms of the conquered. Over the "Waste" or "Desert"—the range of barren moors which stretches from Derbyshire to the Cheviots —the Briton had sought a refuge in the long strip of coast between the

*Cumbria.*

Clyde and the Dee which formed the earlier Cumbria. Against this kingdom the efforts of the Northumbrian rulers had been incessantly directed; the victory of Chester had severed it from the Welsh kingdoms to the south; Lancashire, Westmoreland, and Cumberland were

Digitized by Google

already subdued by the time of Ecgfrith; while the wretched fragment which was suffered to remain unconquered between the Firths of Solway and of Clyde, and to which the name of Cumbria is in its later use confined, owned the English supremacy. At the close of the seventh century, indeed, it seemed likely that the same supremacy would extend over the Welsh tribes to the north. To these Picts of the Highlands the land south of the Forth was a foreign land, and significant entries in their rude chronicles tell us how in their forays "the Picts made a raid upon Saxony." But they had long bowed to a vague acknowledgment of the English over-lordship: the English fortress of Edinburgh looked menacingly across the Forth, and at Abercorn beside it was established an English prelate with the title of Bishop of the Picts. Ecgfrith, in whose hands the power of Northumbria reached its highest point, marched across Forth to change this over-lordship into a direct dominion, and to bring the series of English victories to a close. His host poured burning and ravaging across the Tay, and skirted the base of the Grampians as far as the field of Nectansmere, where King Bruidi awaited them at the head of the Picts. The great battle which followed proved a turning-point in the history of the North; the invaders were cut to pieces, Ecgfrith himself being among the slain, and the power of Northumbria was broken for ever. On the other hand, the kingdom of the Picts started into new life with its great victory, and pushed its way in the hundred years that followed westward, eastward, and southward, till the whole country north of the Forth and the Clyde acknowledged its supremacy. But the hour of Pictish greatness was marked by the sudden extinction of the Pictish name. Centuries before, when the English invaders were beginning to harry the south coast of Britain, a fleet of coracles had borne a tribe of the Scots, as the inhabitants of Ireland were at that time called, from the white cliff-walls of Antrim to the rocky and indented coast of South Argyle. The little kingdom of Scot-land which these Irishmen founded slumbered in obscurity among the lakes and mountains to the south of Loch Lynne, now submitting to the over-lordship of Northumbria, now to that of the Picts, till the extinction of the direct Pictish line of sovereigns raised the Scot King, Kenneth Mac-alpin, who chanced to be their nearest kinsman, to the vacant throne. For fifty years these rulers of Scottish blood still call themselves "Kings of the Picts;" but with the opening of the tenth century the very name passes away, the tribe which had given its chief to the common throne gives its designation to the common realm, and "Pict-land" vanishes from the page of the chronicler or annalist to make way for the "land of the Scots."

*Pict-land.*

*Scot-land.*

It was even longer before the change made way among the people itself, and the real union of the nation with its kings was only effected by the common suffering of the Danish wars. In the north, as in the



Digitized by Google

SEC. III.

THE CONQUEST OF SCOTLAND. 1290-1305.

south of Britain, the invasion of the Danes brought about political unity. Not only were Picts and Scots thoroughly blended into a single people, but by the annexation of Cumbria and the Lowlands, their monarchs became rulers of the territory which we now call Scotland. The annexation was owing to the new policy of the English Kings. Their aim, after the long struggle of England with the Northmen, was no longer to crush the kingdom across the Forth, but to raise it into a bulwark against the Danes who were still settled in Caithness and the Orkneys, and for whose aggressions Scotland was the natural highway. On the other hand, it was only in English aid that the Scot Kings could find a support for their throne against these Danish Jarls of Orkney and Caithness. It was probably this common hostility to a common foe which brought about the "commendation" by which the Scots beyond the Forth, with the Welsh of Strath-clyde, chose the

924. English King, Eadward the Elder, "to father and lord." The choice, whatever weight after events may have given to it, seems to have been little more than the renewal of the loose English supremacy over the tribes of the North which had existed during the times of Northumbrian greatness; it certainly implied at the time nothing save a right on either side to military aid, though the aid then rendered was necessarily placed in the hands of the stronger party to the agreement. Such a connection naturally ceased in the event of any war between the two contracting parties; it was in fact by no means the feudal vassalage of a later time, but rather such a military convention as existed after Sadowa between the North-German Confederation and the States south of the Mein. But loose as was the tie which bound the two countries, a closer tie soon bound

*Grant of Strath-clyde to the Scot King.* the Scot King himself to his English overlord. Strath-clyde, which, after the defeat of Nectansmere, had shaken off the English yoke, and which at a later time had owned the supremacy of the Scots, rose into a temporary independence only to be conquered by the English Eadmund. By him it was granted to Malcolm of Scotland on the feudal tenure of distinct military service, and became from that time

*Grant of Northern Northumbria.* the appanage of the eldest son of the Scottish king. At a later time, under Eadgar or Cnut, the whole of Northern Northumbria, or what we now call the Lothians, was ceded to the Scottish sovereigns, but whether on the same terms of feudal dependence as an ordinary English earldom or on the same loose terms of "commendation" as already existed for lands north of the Forth, we have no means of deciding. The retreat, however, of the bounds of the great English bishoprick of the North, the see of St. Cuthbert, as far southward as the Pentland Hills, would seem to imply a greater change in the political character of the ceded district than the first theory would allow.

**England and Scot Kings.** Whatever change these cessions may have brought about in the relation of the Scot Kings to their English overlords, they certainly

Digitized by Google

affected in a very marked way their relation both to England and to their own realm. The first result of the acquisition of the Lowlands was the fixing of the royal residence in their new southern dominions at Edinburgh; and the English civilization with which they were then surrounded changed the Scot Kings in all but blood into Englishmen. A way soon opened itself to the English crown by the marriage of Malcolm with Margaret, the sister of Eadgar Etheling. Their children were regarded by a large party within England as representatives of the older royal race and as claimants of the throne, and this danger grew as the terrible Norman devastation of the North not only drove fresh multitudes of Englishmen to settle in the Lowlands, but filled the Scotch Court with English nobles who had fled thither for refuge. So formidable, indeed, became the pretensions of the Scot Kings, that they forced the ablest of our Norman sovereigns into a complete change of policy. The Conqueror and William the Red had met the threats of the Scot sovereigns by invasions which ended again and again in an illusory homage. The marriage of Henry the First with the Scottish princess Matilda not only robbed of their force the claims of the Scottish line, but enabled him to draw it into far closer relations with the Norman throne. King David not only abandoned the ambitious dreams of his predecessors, to place himself at the head of his niece Matilda's party in her contest with Stephen, but as Henry's brother-in-law he figured as the first noble of the English Court, and found English models and English support in the work of organization which he attempted within his own dominions. As the marriage with Margaret had changed Malcolm from a Celtic chieftain into an English King, so that of Matilda converted David into a Norman and feudal sovereign. *David.* His Court was filled with Norman nobles from the South, such as the Balliols and Bruces who were destined to play so great a part afterwards but who now for the first time obtained fiefs in the Scottish realm, and a feudal jurisprudence modelled on that of England was introduced into the Lowlands. Throughout these changes of front, however, both at home and abroad, the question of the English over-lordship remained unchanged. It was the capture of William the Lion during the revolt of the English baronage which first suggested to the ambition of Henry the Second the project of a closer dependence of Scotland on the English Crown. To gain his freedom, William consented to hold his crown of Henry and his heirs, the prelates and lords of the Scotch kingdom did homage to Henry as to their direct lord, and a right of appeal in all Scotch causes was allowed to the superior court of the English suzerain. From this bondage, however, Scotland was soon freed by the wise prodigality of Richard, who allowed her to repurchase the freedom she had forfeited, and from that time the difficulties of the older claim were prudently evaded by a legal compromise. The Scot

Digitized by Google

SEC. III.
THE CONQUEST OF SCOTLAND.
1290–1305.

King repeatedly did homage, but with a distinct protest that it was rendered for lands which he held in fief within the realm of England. The English King accepted the homage with a counter-protest that it was rendered to him as overlord of the Scottish realm. But for nearly a hundred years the relations of the two countries had remained peaceful and friendly, when the death of Alexander the Third seemed destined to remove even the necessity of protests by a closer union of the two kingdoms. Alexander had left but a single grandchild, the daughter of the Norwegian King, and after long negotiation the Scotch Parliament proposed the marriage of "the Maid of Norway" with the son of Edward the First. It was, however, carefully provided in the marriage treaty of Brigham that Scotland should remain a separate and free kingdom, and that its laws and customs should be preserved inviolate. No military aid was to be claimed by the English King, no Scotch appeal to be carried to an English court. The project, however, was abruptly frustrated by the child's death on her voyage to Scotland, and with the rise of claimant after claimant of the vacant throne Edward was drawn into far other relations to the Scottish realm.

1290.

**The First Conquest.**
1290–1296.

Of the thirteen pretenders to the throne of Scotland, only three could be regarded as serious claimants. By the extinction of the line of William the Lion the right of succession passed to the daughters of his brother David, and the claim of John Balliol, Lord of Galloway, rested on his descent from the elder of these, that of Robert Bruce, Lord of Annandale, on his descent from the second, that of John Hastings, Lord of Abergavenny, on his descent from the third.

It is clear that at this crisis everyone in Scotland or out of it recognized some sort of over-lordship in Edward, for the Norwegian King, the Primate of St. Andrews, and seven of the Scotch Earls, had already appealed to him before Margaret's death, and the death itself was followed by the consent of both the claimants and the Council of Regency to refer the question of the succession to his decision in a Parliament at Norham. But the over-lordship which the Scots acknowledged was something far less direct and definite than what Edward claimed at the opening of this conference. The royal claim was supported by excerpts from monastic chronicles, and by the slow advance of an English army, while the Scotch lords, taken by surprise, found little help in the delay which was granted them, and at last, in common with the claimants themselves, formally admitted Edward's direct suzerainty. To the nobles, in fact, the concession must have seemed a small one; like the principal claimants they were for the most part Norman in blood, with estates in both countries, and looking for honours and pensions from the English Court. From the Commons no admission of Edward's claims could be extorted, but in Scotland, feudalized as it had been by David, the Commons were as yet of little weight, and their opposition was quietly passed by. All the rights of

*May*, 1291.

Digitized by Google

a feudal suzerain were at once assumed by the English King; he entered into the possession of the country as into that of a disputed fief to be held by its over-lord till the dispute was settled, his peace was sworn throughout the land, its castles delivered into his charge, while its bishops and nobles swore homage to him directly as their lord superior. Scotland was thus reduced to the subjection which she had experienced under Henry the Second, but the full discussion which followed over the various claims to the throne showed, that while exacting to the full what he believed to be his right, Edward desired to do justice to the country itself. The body of commissioners which the King nominated were mainly Scotch, a proposal for the partition of the realm among the claimants was rejected as contrary to Scotch law, and the claim of Balliol as representative of the elder branch preferred to that of his rivals.

The castles were at once delivered to the new monarch, and Balliol did homage to Edward with full acknowledgment of the services due to him from the realm of Scotland. For a time there was peace. Edward in fact seemed to have no desire to push farther the rights of his crown. Even allowing that Scotland was a dependent kingdom, it was far from being according to feudal custom an ordinary fief. A distinction had always been held to exist between the relation of a dependent king to his superior lord and those of a vassal noble to his sovereign. At Balliol's homage, Edward had disclaimed, in strict accordance with the marriage treaty of Brigham, any right to the ordinary incidents of a fief, those of wardship or marriage; but there were other customs of the realm of Scotland as incontestable as these. Ecclesiastically, Scotland was independent of any see but that of Rome. Its sovereign again had never been held bound to attend the Council of the English Baronage, to do service in English warfare, or to contribute on the part of his Scotch possessions to English aids. No express acknowledgment of these rights had been given by Edward, but for a time they were practically observed. The right of free justice was as clear as the rest. Since the days of William the Lion no appeal from a Scotch King's Court to that of his overlord had been allowed, and the judicial independence of Scotland had been expressly acknowledged in the marriage treaty. This right of appeal Edward now determined to enforce, and Balliol at first gave way. The resentment, however, 1293.
both of his Baronage and his people, forced him to resist; and while appearing formally at Westminster he refused to answer an appeal save by the advice of his Council. He was in fact looking to France, which, as we shall afterwards see, was jealously watching Edward's proceedings, and ready to force him into war. By a new breach of customary law Edward summoned the Scotch nobles to follow him in arms against this foreign foe. But the summons was disregarded, and a second and formal refusal of aid was followed by a secret

Digitized by Google

SEC. III.
THE CONQUEST OF SCOTLAND.
1290-1305.
1296.

alliance with France and by a Papal absolution of Balliol from his oath of fealty.

Edward was still reluctant to begin the war, when his scruples were relieved by the refusal of Balliol to attend his Parliament at Newcastle, the massacre of a small body of English troops, and the investment of Carlisle by the Scots. Orders were at once given for an advance upon Berwick. The taunts of its citizens stung the King to the quick. "Kynge Edward, waune thou havest Berwick, pike thee; waune thou havest geten, dike thee," they shouted from behind the wooden stockade, which formed the only rampart of the town. But the stockade was stormed with the loss of a single knight, and nearly eight thousand of the citizens were mown down in a ruthless carnage, while a handful of Flemish traders who held the town-hall stoutly against all assailants were burned alive in it. The massacre only ceased when a procession of priests bore the host to the King's presence, praying for mercy, and Edward with a sudden and characteristic burst of tears called off his troops; but the town was ruined for ever, and the great merchant city of the North sank from that time into a petty seaport. At Berwick Edward received Balliol's defiance. "Has the fool done this folly?" the King cried in haughty scorn. "If he will not come to us, we will come to him." The terrible slaughter, however, had done its work, and his march was a triumphal progress. Edinburgh, Stirling, and Perth opened their gates, Bruce joined the English army, and Balliol himself surrendered and passed without a blow from his throne to an English prison. No further punishment, however, was exacted from the prostrate realm. Edward simply treated it as a fief, and declared its forfeiture to be the legal consequence of Balliol's treason. It lapsed in fact to the overlord, and its earls, barons, and gentry swore homage in Parliament at Berwick to Edward as their king. The sacred stone on which its older sovereigns had been installed, an oblong block of limestone, which legend asserted to have been the pillow of Jacob as angels ascended and descended upon him, was removed from Scone and placed in Westminster by the shrine of the Confessor. It was enclosed by Edward's order in a stately seat, which became from that hour the coronation chair of English kings.

**The Second Conquest.**
1297-1305.

To the King himself the whole business must have seemed another and easier conquest of Wales, and the mercy and just government which had followed his first success followed his second also. The government of the new dependency was entrusted to Warrenne, Earl of Surrey, at the head of an English Council of Regency. Pardon was freely extended to all who had resisted the invasion, and order and public peace were rigidly enforced. But both the justice and injustice of the new rule proved fatal to it; the wrath of the Scots, already kindled by the intrusion of English priests into Scotch livings, and by the grant of lands across the border to English barons, was

Digitized by Google

fanned to fury by the strict administration of law, and the repression of feuds and cattle-lifting. The disbanding, too, of troops, which was caused by the penury of the royal exchequer, united with the licence of the soldiery who remained as a protection of the English rule to quicken the national sense of wrong. The disgraceful submission of their leaders brought the people themselves to the front. In spite of a hundred years of peace the farmer of the Lowlands and the artisan of the towns remained stout-hearted Northumbrian Englishmen; they had never consented to Edward's supremacy, and their blood rose against the insolent rule of the stranger. The genius of an outlaw knight, William Wallace, saw in their smouldering discontent a hope of freedom for his country, and his daring raids on outlying parties of the English soldiery soon roused the Lowlands into revolt. Of Wallace himself, of his life or temper, we know little or nothing; the very traditions of his gigantic stature and enormous strength are dim and unhistorical. But the instinct of the Scotch people has guided it aright in choosing Wallace for its national hero. He was the first to sweep aside the technicalities of feudal law and to assert freedom as a national birthright. Amidst the despair of nobles and priests he called the people itself to arms, and his discovery of the military value of the stout peasant footman, who had till then been scorned by baronage and knighthood—a discovery copied by the burghers of Flanders, and repeated in the victories of the Swiss—gave a deathblow to the system of feudalism and changed in the end the face of Europe. At the head of an army drawn principally from the coast districts north of the Tay, which were inhabited by a population of the same blood as that of the Lowlands, Wallace occupied the valley near Stirling, the pass between the north and the south, and awaited the English advance. The offers of Earl Warrenne were scornfully rejected: "We have come here," said the Scottish leader, "not for peace, but to free our country." The position of Wallace, a semicircle of hills behind a loop of Forth, was in fact chosen with consummate skill. The one bridge which crossed the river was only broad enough to admit two horsemen abreast; and though the English army had been passing from daybreak, only half its force was across at noon when Wallace closed on it and cut it, after a short combat, to pieces, in the sight of its helpless comrades. The retreat of Warrenne over the border left Wallace head of the country he had freed, and for a time we find him acting as "Guardian of the Realm" in Balliol's name, and heading a wild foray into Northumberland. His reduction of Stirling Castle at last called Edward to the field. The King, who marched northward with a larger host than had ever followed his banner, was enabled by treachery to surprise Wallace, as he fell back to avoid an engagement, and to force him to battle near Falkirk. The Scotch force still consisted almost wholly of foot, and Wallace drew up his spearmen in

*Battle of Stirling. Sept. 1297.*

Digitized by Google

SEC. III. THE CONQUEST OF SCOTLAND. 1290-1305.

four great hollow circles or squares, the outer ranks kneeling, and the whole supported by bowmen within, while a small force of horse were drawn up as a reserve in the rear. It was the formation of Waterloo, the first appearance in our history since the day of Senlac of "that unconquerable British infantry," before which chivalry was destined to go down. For a moment it had all Waterloo's success. "I have brought you to the ring, hop (dance) if you can," are words of rough humour that reveal the very soul of the patriot leader, and the serried ranks answered well to his appeal. The Bishop of Durham who led the English van shrunk wisely from the look of the squares. "Back to your mass, Bishop," shouted the reckless knights behind him, but the body of horse dashed itself vainly on the wall of spears. Terror spread through the English army, and its Welsh auxiliaries drew off in a body from the field, till the generalship of Wallace was met by that of the King. Drawing his bowmen to the front, Edward riddled the Scottish ranks with arrows, and then hurled his cavalry afresh on the wavering front. In a moment all was over, and the maddened knights rode in and out of the broken ranks, slaying without mercy. Thousands fell on the field, Wallace himself escaped with difficulty, followed by a handful of men. But ruined as the cause of freedom seemed, his work was done; he had roused Scotland into life, and even a defeat like Falkirk left her unconquered. Edward remained master of the ground he stood on; and as soon as want of supplies forced him to retreat, a native regency of the nobles under Bruce and Comyn continued the struggle for independence. For a time dangers from abroad stayed Edward's hand; France was still menacing, and a claim advanced by Pope Boniface the Eighth, at its suggestion, to the feudal superiority over Scotland, arrested a fresh advance of the King. The quarrel, however, between Philip le Bel and the Papacy which soon followed, removed all obstacles, and enabled him to defy Boniface and to wring from France a treaty in which Scotland was abandoned. Edward at once resumed the work of invasion, and again the nobles flung down their arms as he marched to the North. Comyn, at the head of the Regency, acknowledged his sovereignty, and the surrender of Stirling completed the conquest of Scotland. The triumph of Edward was but the prelude to the full execution of his designs for knitting the two countries together by a clemency and wisdom which reveal the greatness of his statesmanship. A general amnesty was extended to all who had shared in the revolt. Wallace, who refused indeed to avail himself of Edward's mercy, was captured, and condemned to death at Westminster on charges of treason, sacrilege, and robbery. The head of the great patriot, crowned in mockery with a circlet of laurel, was placed upon London Bridge. But the execution of Wallace was the one blot on Edward's clemency. With a masterly boldness he entrusted the government of

*Battle of Falkirk, July* 1298.

1300.

1303.

1305.

Digitized by Google

the country to a council of Scotch nobles, many of whom were freshly pardoned for their share in the war, and anticipated the policy of Cromwell by allotting ten representatives to Scotland in the Common Parliament of his realm. A Convocation was summoned at Perth for the election of these representatives, and a great judicial scheme which was promulgated in this assembly adopted the amended laws of David as the base of a new legislation, and divided the country for judicial purposes into four districts, Lothian, Galloway, the Highlands, and the land between the Highlands and the Forth, at the head of each of which were placed two justiciaries, the one English and the other Scotch.

## Section IV.—The English Town.

[*Authorities.*—For the General History of London see its "Liber Albus" and "Liber Custumarum," in the series of the Master of the Rolls; for its Communal Revolution, the "Liber de Antiquis Legibus," edited by Mr. Stapleton for the Camden Society; for the rising of William Longbeard, the story in William of Newborough. In his "Essay on English Municipal History" (1867), Mr. Thompson has given a useful account of the relations of Leicester with its Earls. A great store of documents will be found in the Charter Rolls published by the Record Commission, in Brady's work on English Boroughs, and (though rather for Parliamentary purposes) in Stephen's and Merewether's "History of Boroughs and Corporations." But the only full and scientific examination of our early municipal history, at least on one of its sides, is to be found in the Essay prefixed by Dr. Brentano to the "Ordinances of English Gilds," published by the Early English Text Society.]

From scenes such as we have been describing, from the wrong and bloodshed of foreign conquest, we pass to the peaceful life and progress of England itself.

Through the reign of the three Edwards two revolutions, which have been almost ignored by our historians, were silently changing the whole character of English society. The first of these, the rise of a new class of tenant-farmers, we shall have to notice hereafter in its connection with the great agrarian revolt which bears the name of Wat Tyler. The second, the rise of the Craftsmen within our towns, and the struggle by which they won power and privilege from the older burghers, is the most remarkable event in the period of our national history at which we have arrived.

**The Early English Boroughs.**

We have already briefly described the outer progress of the earlier English boroughs. In England the town was originally, in every case save that of London, a mere bit of land within the lordship, whether of the king or some great noble or ecclesiastic, whose inhabitants happened, either for purposes of trade or protection, to cluster together more closely than elsewhere. It is this characteristic of our boroughs that separates them at once from the cities of Italy and Provence, which had preserved the municipal institutions of their

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV. THE ENGLISH TOWN.

Roman origins, from the German towns founded by Henry the Fowler with the special purpose of sheltering industry from the feudal oppression around them, or from the French communes which at a later time sprang into existence in sheer revolt against feudal outrage within their walls. In England the tradition of Rome had utterly passed away, while the oppression of feudalism was held fairly in check by the power of the Crown. The English town, therefore, was in its beginning simply a piece of the general country, organized and governed in the same way as the manors around it, that is to say, justice was administered, its annual rent collected, and its customary services exacted by the reeve or steward of the lord to whose estate it belonged. To modern eyes the subjection which these services involved might seem complete. When Leicester, for instance, passed from the hands of the Conqueror into those of its Earls, its townsmen were bound to reap their lord's corn-crops, to grind at his mill, to redeem their strayed cattle from his pound. The great forest around was the Earl's, and it was only out of his grace that the little borough could drive its swine into the woods or pasture its cattle in the glades. The justice and government of the town lay wholly in its master's hands; he appointed its bailiffs, received the fines and forfeitures of his tenants, and the fees and tolls of their markets and fairs. But when once these dues were paid and these services rendered the English townsman was practically free. His rights were as rigidly defined by custom as those of his lord. Property and person alike were secured against arbitrary seizure. He could demand a fair trial on any charge, and even if justice was administered by his master's reeve it was administered in the presence and with the assent of his fellow-townsmen. The bell which swung out from the town tower gathered the burgesses to a common meeting, where they could exercise rights of free speech and free deliberation on their own affairs. Their merchant-gild over its ale-feast regulated trade, distributed the sums due from the town among the different burgesses, looked to the due repairs of gate and wall, and acted, in fact, pretty much the same part as a town-council of to-day. Not only, too, were these rights secured by custom from the first, but they were constantly widening as time went on. Whenever we get a glimpse of the inner history of an English town, we find the same peaceful revolution in progress, services disappearing, through disuse or omission, while privileges and immunitites are being purchased in hard cash. The lord of the town, whether he were king, baron, or abbot, was commonly thriftless or poor, and the capture of a noble, or the campaign of a sovereign, or the building of some new minster by a prior, brought about an appeal to the thrifty burghers, who were ready to fill again their master's treasury at the price of the strip of parchment which gave them freedom of trade, of justice, and of government. Some-

Digitized by Google

times a chance story lights up for us this work of emancipation. At Leicester, one of the chief aims of its burgesses was to regain their old English jury trial (or practice of compurgation) which had been abolished by the Earls in favour of the foreign trial by duel. "It chanced," says a charter of the time, "that two kinsmen, Nicholas the son of Acon, and Geoffrey the son of Nicholas, waged a duel about a certain piece of land, concerning which a dispute had arisen between them; and they fought from the first to the ninth hour, each conquering by turns. Then one of them fleeing from the other till he came to a certain little pit, as he stood on the brink of the pit, and was about to fall therein, his kinsman said to him 'Take care of the pit, turn back lest thou shouldest fall in to it.' Thereat so much clamour and noise was made by the bystanders and those who were sitting around, that the Earl heard these clamours as far off as the castle, and he inquired of some how it was there was such a clamour, and answer was made to him that two kinsmen were fighting about a certain piece of ground, and that one had fled till he reached a certain little pit, and that as he stood over the pit and was about to fall into it the other warned him. Then the townsmen being moved with pity, made a covenant with the Earl that they should give him threepence yearly for each house in the High Street that had a gable, on condition that he should grant to them that the twenty-four jurors who were in Leicester from ancient times should from that time forward discuss and decide all pleas they might have among themselves." For the most part the liberties of our towns were bought in this way, by sheer hard bargaining. The earliest English charters, save that of London, date from the years when the treasury of Henry the First was drained by his Norman wars; and grants of municipal liberty made professedly by the Angevins are probably the result of their costly employment of mercenary troops. At the close, however, of the thirteenth century, this work of outer emancipation was practically complete. All the more important English towns had secured the right of justice in their own borough-courts, of self-government, and of self-taxation, and their liberties and charters served as models and incentives to the smaller communities which were struggling into life.

**The Frith Gilds.**

During the progress of this outer revolution, the inner life of the English town was in the same quiet and hardly conscious way developing itself from the common form of the life around it into a form especially its own. Within as without the ditch or stockade which formed the first boundary of the borough, land was from the first the test of freedom, and the possession of land was what constituted the townsman. We may take, perhaps, a foreign instance to illustrate this fundamental point in our municipal history. When Duke Berthold of Zahringen resolved to found Freiburg, his 'free town,' in the Brisgau, the mode he adopted was to gather a group of traders together, and to

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV. THE ENGLISH TOWN.

give each man a plot of ground for his freehold round what was destined to be the market-place of the new community. In England the 'landless' man had no civic as he had no national existence; the 'town' was simply an association of the landed proprietors within its bounds; nor was there anything in this association, as it originally existed, which could be considered peculiar or exceptional. The constitution of the English town, however different its form may have afterwards become, was at the first simply that of the people at large. We have before seen that among the German races society rested on the basis of the family, that it was the family who fought and settled side by side, and the kinsfolk who were bound together in ties of mutual responsibility to each other and to the law. As society became more complex and less stationary it neccessarily outgrew these simple ties of blood, and in England this dissolution of the family bond seems to have taken place at the very time when Danish incursions and the growth of a feudal temper among the nobles rendered an isolated existence most perilous for the freeman. His only resource was to seek protection among his fellow-freemen, and to replace the older brotherhood of the kinsfolk by a voluntary association of his neighbours for the same purposes of order and self-defence. The tendency to unite in such 'Frith-gilds' or Peace-clubs became general throughout Europe during the ninth and tenth centuries, but on the Continent it was roughly met and repressed. The successors of Charles the Great enacted penalties of scourging, nose-slitting, and banishment against voluntary unions, and even a league of the poor peasants of Gaul against the inroads of the Northmen was suppressed by the swords of the Frankish nobles. In England the attitude of the Kings was utterly different. The system of 'frank-pledge,' or free engagement of neighbour for neighbour, was accepted after the Danish wars as the base of social order. Alfred recognized the common responsibility of the members of the 'frith-gild' side by side with that of the kinsfolk, and Athelstan accepted 'frith-gilds' as the constituent element of borough life in the Dooms of London.

**The Merchant Gild.**

The frith-gild, then, in the earlier English town, was precisely similar to the frith-gilds which formed the basis of social order in the country at large. An oath of mutual fidelity among its members was substituted for the tie of blood, while the gild-feast, held once a month in the common hall, replaced the gathering of the kinsfolk round their family hearth. But within this new family the aim of the frith-gild was to establish a mutual responsibility as close as that of the old. "Let all share the same lot," ran its law; "if any misdo, let all bear it." Its member could look for aid from his gild-brothers in atoning for any guilt incurred by mishap. He could call on them for assistance in case of violence or wrong: if falsely accused, they appeared in court as his compurgators; if poor, they supported, and when dead they buried him.

Digitized by Google

On the other hand, he was responsible to them, as they were to the State, for order and obedience to the laws. A wrong of brother against brother was also a wrong against the general body of the gild, and was punished by fine, or in the last resort by expulsion which left the offender a 'lawless' man and an outcast. The one difference between these gilds in country and town was, that in the latter case, from their close local neighbourhood, they tended inevitably to coalesce. Under Athelstan the London gilds united into one for the purpose of carrying out more effectually their common aims, and at a later time we find the gilds of Berwick enacting "that where many bodies are found side by side in one place they may become one, and have one will, and in the dealings of one with another have a strong and hearty love." The process was probably a long and difficult one, for the brotherhoods naturally differed much in social rank, and even after the union was effected we see traces of the separate existence to a certain extent of some one or more of the wealthier or more aristocratic gilds. In London, for instance, the Knighten-gild, which seems to have stood at the head of its fellows, retained for a long time its separate property, while its Alderman—as the chief officer of each gild was called—became the Alderman of the united gild of the whole city. In Canterbury, we find a similar gild of Thanes, from which the chief officers of the town seem commonly to have been selected. Imperfect, however, as the union might be, when once it was effected the town passed from a mere collection of brotherhoods into a powerful and organized community, whose character was inevitably determined by the circumstances of its origin. In their beginnings our boroughs seem to have been mainly gatherings of persons engaged in agricultural pursuits; the first Dooms of London provide especially for the recovery of cattle belonging to the citizens. But as the increasing security of the country invited the farmer or the squire to settle apart in his own fields, and the growth of estate and trade told on the towns themselves, the difference between town and country became more sharply defined. London, of course, took the lead in this new development of civic life. Even in Athelstan's day every London merchant who had made three long voyages on his own account ranked as a Thane. Its 'lithsmen,' or shippers'-gild, were of sufficient importance under Hardicanute to figure in the election of a king, and its principal street still tells of the rapid growth of trade, in the name of 'Cheap-side,' or the bargaining place. But at the Norman Conquest the commercial tendency had become universal. The name given to the united brotherhood is in almost every case no longer that of the 'town-gild,' but of the 'merchant-gild.'

**The Craft-Gilds.**

This social change in the character of the townsmen produced important results in the character of their municipal institutions. In becoming a merchant-gild the body of citizens who formed the

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV. THE ENGLISH TOWN.

'town,' enlarged their powers of civic legislation by applying them to the control of their internal trade. It became their special business to obtain from the Crown, or from their lords, wider commercial privileges, rights of coinage, grants of fairs, and exemption from tolls; while within the town itself they framed regulations as to the sale and quality of goods, the control of markets, and the recovery of debts. A yet more important result sprang from the increase of population which the growth of wealth and industry brought with it. The mass of the new settlers, composed as they were of escaped serfs, of traders without landed holdings, of families who had lost their original lot in the borough, and generally of the artisans and the poor, had no part in the actual life of the town. The right of trade and of the regulation of trade, in common with all other forms of jurisdiction, lay wholly in the hands of the landed burghers whom we have described. By a natural process, too, their superiority in wealth produced a fresh division between the 'burghers' of the merchant-gild and the unenfranchised mass around them. The same change which severed at Florence the seven Greater Arts, or trades, from the fourteen Lesser Arts, and which raised the three occupations of banking, the manufacture and the dyeing of cloth, to a position of superiority even within the privileged circle of the seven, told, though with less force, on the English boroughs. The burghers of the merchant-gild gradually concentrated themselves on the greater operations of commerce, on trades which required a larger capital, while the meaner employments of general traffic were abandoned to their poorer neighbours. This advance in the division of labour is marked by such severances as we note in the thirteenth century of the cloth merchant from the tailor, or the leather merchant from the butcher. But the result of this severance was all-important in its influence on the constitution of our towns. The members of the trades thus abandoned by the wealthier burghers formed themselves into craft-gilds, which soon rose into dangerous rivalry with the original merchant-gild of the town. A seven years' apprenticeship formed the necessary prelude to full membership of any trade-gild. Their regulations were of the minutest character; the quality and value of work was rigidly prescribed, the hours of toil fixed "from day-break to curfew," and strict provision made against competition in labour. At each meeting of these gilds their members gathered round the Craft-box, which contained the rules of their Society, and stood with bared heads as it was opened. The warden and a quorum of gild-brothers formed a court which enforced the ordinances of the gild, inspected all work done by its members, or confiscated unlawful tools or unworthy goods; and disobedience to their orders was punished by fines, or in the last resort by expulsion, which involved the loss of right to trade. A common fund was raised by contributions among the members, which not only provided for the trade objects of the gild, but sufficed to found

Digitized by Google

chantries and masses, and erect painted windows in the church of their patron saint. Even at the present day the arms of the craft-gild may often be seen blazoned in cathedrals side by side with those of prelates and of kings. But it was only by slow degrees that they rose to such eminence as this. The first steps in their existence were the most difficult, for to enable a trade-gild to carry out its objects with any success, it was necessary, first, that the whole body of craftsmen belonging to the trade should be compelled to belong to it, and secondly, that a legal control over the trade itself should be secured to it. A royal charter was indispensable for these purposes, and over the grant of these charters took place the first struggle with the merchant-gild, which had till then solely exercised jurisdiction over trade within the boroughs. The weavers, who were the first to secure royal sanction in the reign of Henry the First, were still engaged in the contest for existence as late as the reign of John, when the citizens of London bought for a time the suppression of their gild. Even under the house of Lancaster, Exeter was engaged in resisting the establishment of a tailor's gild. From the eleventh century, however, the spread of these societies went steadily on, and the control of trade passed from the merchant-gilds to the new craft-gilds.

**The Greater and Lesser Folk.**

It is this struggle, to use the technical terms of the time, of the "greater folk" against the "lesser folk," or of the "commune," the general mass of the inhabitants, against the "prudhommes," or "wiser" few, which brought about, as it passed from the regulation of trade to the general government of the town, the great civic revolution of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. On the Continent, and especially along the Rhine, the struggle was as fierce as the supremacy of the older burghers had been complete. In Köln the craftsmen had been reduced to all but serfage, and the merchant of Brussels might box at his will the ears of "the man without heart or honour who lives by his toil." Such social tyranny of class over class brought a century of bloodshed to the cities of Germany; but in England the tyranny of class over class had been restrained by the general tenor of the law, and the revolution took for the most part a milder form. The longest and bitterest strife of all was naturally at London. Nowhere had the territorial constitution struck root so deeply, and nowhere had the landed oligarchy risen to such a height of wealth and influence. The city was divided into wards, each of which was governed by an alderman drawn from the ruling class. In some, indeed, the office seems to have become hereditary. The "magnates," or "barons," of the merchant-gild advised alone on all matters of civic government or trade regulation, and distributed or assessed at their will the revenues or burthens of the town. Such a position afforded an opening for corruption and oppression of the most galling kind; and it seems to have been the general impression of the unfairness of the assessment levied on the



Digitized by Google

SEC. IV. THE ENGLISH TOWN.

poor, and the undue burthens which were thrown on the unenfranchised classes, which provoked the first serious discontent. William of the Long Beard, himself one of the governing body, placed himself at the head of a conspiracy which numbered, in the terrified fancy of the burghers, fifty thousand of the craftsmen. His eloquence, his bold defiance of the aldermen in the town-mote, gained him at any rate a wide popularity, and the crowds who surrounded him hailed him as "the saviour of the poor." One of his addresses is luckily preserved to us by a hearer of the time. In mediæval fashion he began with a text from the Vulgate, "Ye shall draw water with joy from the fountain of the Saviour." "I," he began, "am the saviour of the poor. Ye poor men who have felt the weight of rich men's hands, draw from my fountain waters of wholesome instruction and that with joy, for the time of your visitation is at hand. For I will divide the waters from the waters. It is the people who are the waters, and I will divide the lowly and faithful folk from the proud and faithless folk; I will part the chosen from the reprobate as light from darkness." But it was in vain that by appeals to the King he strove to win royal favour for the popular cause. The support of the moneyed classes was essential to Richard in the costly wars with Philip of France, and the Justiciary, Archbishop Hubert, after a moment of hesitation, issued orders for his arrest. William seized an axe and felled the first soldier who advanced to seize him, and taking refuge with a few adherents in the tower of Saint Mary-le-Bow, summoned his adherents to rise. Hubert, however, who had already flooded the city with troops, with bold contempt of the right of sanctuary set fire to the tower and forced William to surrender. A burgher's son, whose father he had slain, stabbed him as he came forth, and with his death the quarrel slumbered for more than fifty years.

**The Commune.**

No further movement, in fact, took place till the outbreak of the Barons' wars, but the city had all through the interval been seething with discontent; the unenfranchised craftsmen, under pretext of preserving the peace, had united in secret frith-gilds of their own, and mobs rose from time to time to sack the houses of foreigners and the wealthier burghers. But it was not till the civil war began that the open contest recommenced. The craftsmen forced their way into the town-mote, and

1261. setting aside the aldermen and magnates, chose Thomas-fitz-Thomas for their mayor. Although dissension still raged during the reign of the second Edward, we may regard this election as marking the final victory of the craft-gilds. Under his successor all contest seems to have ceased: charters had been granted to every trade, their ordinances formally recognized and enrolled in the mayor's court, and distinctive liveries assumed to which they owed the name of "Livery Companies," which they still retain. The wealthier citizens, who found their old power broken, regained influence by enrolling themselves as members of the trade-gilds, and Edward the Third himself humoured the

Digitized by Google

current of civic feeling by becoming a member of the gild of Armourers. This event marks the time when the government of our towns had become more really popular than it ever again became till the Municipal Reform Act of our own days. It had passed from the hands of an oligarchy into those of the middle classes, and there was nothing as yet to foretell the reactionary revolution by which the trade-gilds themselves became an oligarchy as narrow as that which they had deposed.

### Section V.—The King and the Baronage, 1290—1327.

[*Authorities.*—For Edward I. as before. For Edward II. we have three important contemporaries: on the King's side, Thomas de la Moor (in Camden, "Anglica, Brittanica, etc."); on that of the Barons, Trokelowe's Annals (published by the Master of the Rolls), and the Life by a monk of Malmesbury, printed by Hearne. The short Chronicle by Murimuth is also contemporary in date. Hallam ("Middle Ages") has illustrated the constitutional aspect of the time.]

**England under Edward I.**

If we turn again to the constitutional history of England from the accession of Edward the First we find a progress not less real but chequered with darker vicissitudes than the progress of our towns. Able as Edward undoubtedly was, he failed utterly to recognize the great transfer of power which had been brought about by the long struggle for the Charter, by the reforms of Earl Simon, and by his own earlier legislation. His conception of kingship was that of a just and religious Henry the Second, but his England was as different from the England of Henry as the Parliament of the one was different from the Great Council of the other. In the rough rimes of Robert of Gloucester we read the simple political creed of the people at large.

> "When the land through God's grace to good peace was brought
> For to have the old laws the high men turned their thought:
> For to have, as we said erst, the good old Law,
> The King made his charter and granted it with sawe."

But the power which the Charter had wrested from the Crown fell not to the people but to the Baronage. The farmer and the artisan, though they could fight in some great crisis for freedom, had as yet no wish to interfere in the common task of government. The vast industrial change in both town and country, which had begun during the reign of Henry the Third, and which continued with increasing force during that of his son, absorbed the energy and attention of the trading classes. In agriculture, the inclosure of common lands and the introduction of the system of leases on the part of the great proprietors, coupled with the subdivision of estates which was facilitated by



Digitized by Google

SEC. V.
THE KING AND THE BARONAGE.
1290-1327.

Edward's legislation, was gradually creating out of the masses of rural bondsmen a new class of tenant farmers, whose whole energy was absorbed in their own great rise to social freedom. The very causes which rendered the growth of municipal liberty so difficult, increased the wealth of the towns. To the trade with Norway and the Hanse towns of North Germany, the wool-trade with Flanders, and the wine trade with Gascony, was now added a fast increasing commerce with Italy and Spain. The great Venetian merchant galleys appeared on the English coast, Florentine traders settled in the southern ports, the bankers of Lucca followed those of Cahors, who had already dealt a death-blow to the usury of the Jews. But the wealth and industrial energy of the country was shown, not only in the rise of a capitalist class, but in a crowd of civil and ecclesiastical buildings which distinguished this period. Christian architecture reached its highest beauty in the opening of Edward's reign, a period marked by the completion of the abbey church of Westminster and the exquisite cathedral church at Salisbury. The noble of the day was proud to be styled "an incomparable builder," while some traces of the art of Italy, which was just springing into life, flowed in with the Italian ecclesiastics whom the Papacy was forcing on the English Church. In the abbey of Westminster the shrine of the Confessor, the mosaic pavement, and the paintings on the walls of minster and chapter-house, remind us of the school which was about to spring up under Giotto.

The Baronage and its rule.

But even had this industrial distraction been wanting the trading classes had no mind to claim any direct part in the actual work of government. It was a work which, in default of the Crown, fell naturally, according to the ideas of the time, to the Baronage, and in the Baronage the nation reposed an unwavering trust. The nobles of England were no longer the brutal foreigners from whose violence the strong hand of the Norman sovereign had been needed to protect their subjects; they were as English as the peasant or the trader. They had won English liberty by their swords, and the popular trust in their fidelity to its cause was justified by the tradition of their order, which bound them to look on themselves as its natural guardians. Quietly, therefore, and by a natural process of political development, the problem which Earl Simon had first dared to face, how to ensure the government of the realm in accordance with the Charter, was solved as Simon had solved it, by the transfer of the business of administration into the hands of a standing committee of the greater prelates and barons, acting as the chief officers of state under the name of the Continual Council. The quiet government of the kingdom by this body in the interval between the death of Henry the Third and the return of Edward the First, if we contrast it with the disorders which had previously followed a king's decease, proves that the Crown was no longer the real depositary of political power. In the brief indeed

Digitized by Google

which announced Edward's accession the Council asserted the crown to have devolved on the new monarch "by the will of the peers." At an earlier time the personal greatness of Edward might have redressed the balance, but the character of his legislation, as we have traced it in a former page, and especially the oligarchical character of his land laws, shows the influence of the Baronage to have remained practically supreme. The very form indeed of the new Parliament, in which the barons were backed by the knights of the shire, elected for the most part under their influence, and by the representatives of the towns, still true to the traditions of the Barons' war; the increased frequency of these Parliamentary assemblies which gave opportunity for counsel, for party organization, and a distinct political base of action; above all, the new financial power which their control over taxation enabled them to exert on the throne, placed the rule of the nobles on a basis too strong to be shaken by the utmost efforts of even Edward himself.

**Edward and the Baronage.**

From the very outset of his reign the King struggled fruitlessly against this overpowering influence. He was the last man to be content with a crown held "at the will of the peers," and his sympathies must have been stirred by the revolution on the other side the Channel, where the successors of St. Lewis were crushing the power of the feudal Baronage and erecting a royal despotism on its ruins. He at once copied the French monarchs by issuing writs of "quo warranto," which required every noble to produce his titles to his estates. But the attack was roughly met. Earl Warrenne bared a rusty sword, and flung it on the commissioners' table. "This, sirs," said he, "is my title-deed. By the sword my fathers won their lands when they came over with the Conqueror, and by my sword I will hold them." The King dealt a harder blow at the Baronage in his rigorous enforcement of public order. Different as the English nobles were from the feudal noblesse of Germany and France, there is in every military class a tendency to outrage and violence, which even the stern justice of Edward found it difficult to repress. Great earls, such as those of Gloucester and Hereford, carried on private war along the Welsh marches; in Shropshire, the Earl of Arundel waged his feud with Fulk Fitz Warine. To the lesser nobles the wealth of the trader, the long wain of goods as it passed along the highway, was a tempting prey. Once, under cover of a mock tournament of monks against canons, a band of country gentlemen succeeded in introducing themselves into the great merchant fair at Boston; at nightfall every booth was on fire, the merchants robbed and slaughtered, and the booty carried off to ships which lay ready at the quay. Streams of gold and silver, ran the tale of popular horror, flowed melted down the gutters to the sea; "all the money in England could hardly make good the loss." At the close of Edward's reign lawless bands of "trail-bastons," or club-men, maintained themselves by general outrage, aided the country nobles in their

Digitized by Google

SEC. V.

THE KING AND THE BARONAGE.

1290-1327.

feuds, and wrested money and goods by threats from the great tradesmen. The King was strong enough to fine and imprison the Earls, to hang the chief of the Boston marauders, and to suppress the outlaws by rigorous commissions. But he had struck from his hands, by two widely different measures, his chief resources for a struggle with the Barons when the Scotch war suddenly placed him at their mercy.

**The Judges and the Jews.**

It was by the support of the lawyer class, by its hatred of the noblesse, by its introduction of the civil law and the doctrine of a royal despotism, that the French Kings had trampled feudalism under foot. In England so perfect was the national union, that the very judges were themselves necessarily drawn from the body of the lesser Baronage. It was probably their uselessness for any purposes of royal aggression, quite as much as their personal corruption, which Edward

1290. suddenly punished by a clean sweep of the bench. The Chief Justiciary was banished from the realm, and his colleagues imprisoned and fined. While his justice thus robbed him of the weapon of the law, fanaticism robbed him of the financial resource which had so often enabled his predecessors to confront their people. Under the Angevins the popular hatred of the Jews had grown rapidly in intensity. But the royal protection had never wavered. Henry the Second had granted them the right of burial outside of every city where they dwelt. Richard had punished heavily a massacre of the Jews at York, and he organized a mixed court of Jews and Christians for the registration of their contracts. John suffered none to plunder them save himself, though he once wrested from them a sum equal to a year's revenue of his realm. But the very troubles of the time brought in a harvest greater than even the royal greed could reap; the Jews grew wealthy enough to acquire estates, and only a burst of popular feeling prevented a legal decision which would have enabled them to own freeholds, and rise to an equal citizenship with their Christian neighbours. Their pride and contempt of the superstitions around them broke out in the taunts they levelled at processions as they passed their Jewries, sometimes as at Oxford in actual attacks upon them. Wild stories floated about among the people of children carried off to Jewish houses, to be circumcised and crucified, and a boy of Lincoln who was found slain in a Jewish house was canonized by popular reverence as "S. Hugh." Fanaticism met fanaticism, and the first work of the Friars was to settle in the Hebrew quarters and establish their convent-houses. But the tide of popular fury was rising too fast for these gentler means of reconciliation. When the Franciscans saved seventy Jews from death by their prayers to the King the populace angrily refused the brethren alms. The sack of Jewry after Jewry was the sign of popular triumph during the Barons' war. With its close, fell on the Jews the more terrible persecution of the law. Statute after statute hemmed

Digitized by Google

them in. They were forbidden to hold real property, to employ, Christian servants, to move through the streets without the coloured tablet of wool on their breast which distinguished their race. They were prohibited from building new synagogues, or eating with Christians, or acting as physicians to them. Their trade, already crippled by the rivalry of the bankers of Cahors, was annihilated by a royal order, which bade them renounce usury under pain of death. At last persecution could do no more, and on the eve of his struggle with Scotland, Edward, eager for popular favour, and himself swayed by the fanaticism of his subjects, ended the long agony of the Jews by their expulsion from the realm. Of the sixteen thousand who preferred exile to apostasy few reached the shores of France. Many were wrecked others robbed and flung overboard. One ship-master turned out a crew of wealthy merchants on to a sandbank, and bade them call a new Moses to save them from the sea. From the time of Edward to that of Cromwell no Jew touched English ground. 1290.

**Edward I and the Baronage.**

No share in the enormities which accompanied the expulsion of the Jews can fall upon Edward, for he not only suffered the fugitives to take their wealth with them, but punished with the halter those who plundered them at sea. But the expulsion was none the less a crime, and a crime for which punishment was quick to follow. The grant of a fifteenth made by the grateful Parliament proved but a poor substitute for the loss which the royal treasury had sustained. The demands of the Scotch war grew heavier day by day, and they were soon aggravated by the yet greater expenses of the French war which it entailed. It was sheer want which drove Edward to tyrannous extortion. His first blow fell on the Church; he demanded half their annual income from the clergy, and so terrible was his wrath at their resistance, that the Dean of S. Paul's, who had stood forth to remonstrate, dropped dead of sheer terror at his feet. "If any oppose the King's demand," said a royal envoy, in the midst of the Convocation, "let him stand up that he may be noted as an enemy to the King's peace." The outraged churchmen fell back on an untenable plea that their aid was due solely to Rome, and pleaded a bull of exemption, granted by Pope Boniface VIII., as a ground for refusing to comply with further taxation. Edward met their refusal by a general outlawry of the whole order. The King's courts were closed, and all justice denied to those who refused the King aid. The clergy had, in fact, put themselves in the wrong, and the outlawry soon forced them to submission, but their aid did little to recruit the exhausted treasury, while the pressure of the war steadily increased. Far wider measures of arbitrary taxation were needful to equip an expedition which Edward prepared to lead in person to Flanders. The country gentlemen were compelled to take up knighthood, or to compound for exemption from the burthensome honour. Forced contributions of cattle and corn were demanded from 1298.

Digitized by Google

SEC. V.
THE KING AND THE BARONAGE.
1290-1327.

1297. the counties, and the export duty on wool—now the staple produce of the country—was raised to six times its former amount. The work of the Great Charter and the Barons' war seemed suddenly to have been undone, but the blow had no sooner been struck than Edward found himself powerless within his realm. The Baronage roused itself to resistance, and the two greatest of the English nobles, Bohun, Earl of Hereford, and Bigod, Earl of Norfolk, placed themselves at the head of the opposition. Their feudal tenures did not bind them to foreign service, and their protest against the war and the financial measures by which it was carried on, took the practical form of a refusal to follow Edward to Flanders. "By God, Sir Earl," swore the King to Bohun, "you shall either go or hang!" "By God, Sir King," was the cool reply, "I will neither go nor hang!" Ere the Parliament he had convened could meet, Edward had discovered his own powerlessness, and, with one of those sudden revulsions of feeling of which his nature was capable, he stood before his people in Westminster Hall and owned, with a burst of tears, that he had taken their substance without due warrant of law. His passionate appeal to their loyalty wrested a reluctant assent to the prosecution of the war, but the crisis had taught the need of further securities against the royal power, and while Edward was still struggling in Flanders the Church and the Baronage drew together in their old alliance. The Primate, Winchelsey, joined the two Earls and the citizens of London in forbidding any further levy of supplies, and in summoning a new Parliament, in which the Charter was not only confirmed but new articles were added to it, prohibiting the King from raising taxes save by general consent of the realm. Edward hurried back from Flanders, but his struggles to evade a public ratification of the Charter, his attempt to add an evasive clause saving the right of the Crown, and the secret brief which he procured from the Papacy annulling the statute altogether, only proved the bitterness of his humiliation. A direct threat of rebellion forced him to swear compliance with its provisions, and four years later a fresh gathering of the Barons in arms wrested from him

1302. the full execution of the Charter of Forests. The successes gained over Scotland at the close of Edward's reign seemed for a moment to restore vigour to the royal authority; but the fatal struggle revived in the rising of Robert Bruce, and the King's death bequeathed the contest to his worthless son.

**The Lords Ordainers.**

Worthless, however, as Edward the Second morally might be, he was far from being destitute of the intellectual power which seemed hereditary in the Plantagenets. It was his settled purpose to fling off the yoke of the Baronage, and the means by which he designed accomplishing his purpose was a Ministry wholly dependent on the Crown. We have already noticed the change by which the "clerks of the king's chapel," who had been the ministers of arbitrary government

Digitized by Google

under the Normans and Angevins, had been quietly superseded by the prelates and lords of the Continual Council. At the close of his father's reign, a direct demand on the part of the Barons to nominate the great officers of state had been curtly rejected; but the royal choice had been practically limited in the selection of its ministers to the class of prelates and nobles, and, however closely connected with royalty, such officers always to a great extent shared the feelings and opinions of their order. It was the aim of the young King to undo the change which had been silently brought about, and to imitate the policy of the contemporary sovereigns of France by choosing as his ministers men of an inferior position, wholly dependent on the Crown for their power, and representatives of nothing but the policy and interests of their master. Piers Gaveston, a foreigner sprung from a family of Guienne, had been his friend and companion during his father's reign, at the close of which he had been banished from the realm for his share in intrigues which had divided Edward from his son. At the opening of the new reign he was at once recalled, created Earl of Cornwall, and placed at the head of the administration. Gay, 1307.
genial, thriftless, Gaveston showed in his first acts the quickness and audacity of Southern Gaul; the older ministers were dismissed, all claims of precedence or inheritance set aside in the distribution of offices at the coronation, while taunts and defiances goaded the proud Baronage to fury. The favourite was a fine soldier, and his lance unhorsed his opponents in tourney after tourney. His reckless wit flung nicknames about the Court, the Earl of Lancaster was "the Actor," Pembroke "the Jew," Warwick "the Black Dog." But taunt and defiance broke helplessly against the iron mass of the Baronage. After a few months of power the formal demand of the Parliament for his dismissal could not be resisted, and his exile was followed by the refusal of a grant of supply till redress had been granted for the 1308
grievances of which the Commons complained. The great principle on which the whole of our constitutional history really hangs, that the redress of grievances should precede the grant of aid to the Crown, was established by Edward's reluctant assent to the demand of the Parliament, and the great concession purchased Gaveston's return. His policy, however, was the same as before, and in a few months the Barons were again in arms. The administrative revolution of the King was met by the revival of the bold measures of Earl Simon, and the appointment in full Parliament of a standing Committee of bishops, earls, and barons, for the government of the realm during the coming year. A formidable list of "Articles of Reform" drawn up by these 1310.
"Lords Ordainers" met Edward on his return from a fruitless warfare with the Scots, the most important of which related to the constitution of the executive power. Parliaments were to be holden at least once a year; the consent of the Baronage assembled in them was required

Digitized by Google

SEC. V.
THE KING AND THE BARONAGE.
1290-1327.

for a declaration of war or the King's departure from the realm, for the choice of all the great officers of the Crown and of the wardens of the royal castles, while that of the sheriffs was left to the Continual Council whom they nominated. The demand was in fact one for a transfer of the King's authority into the hands of the Baronage, for the part of the Commons in Parliament was still confined to the presentation of petitions of grievances and the grant of money, and it was only after a long and obstinate struggle that Edward was forced to comply. The exile of Gaveston was the sign of the Barons' triumph; his return a few months later renewed a strife which was only ended by his capture in Scarborough. The "Black Dog" of Warwick had sworn that the favourite should feel his teeth; and Gaveston, who flung himself in vain at the feet of the Earl of Lancaster, praying for pity "from his gentle lord," was beheaded in defiance of the terms of
1312. his capitulation on Blacklow Hill. The King's burst of grief was as fruitless as his threats of vengeance; a feigned submission of the conquerors completed the royal humiliation, and the Barons knelt before Edward in Westminster Hall to receive a pardon which seemed the deathblow of the royal power. But if Edward was powerless to conquer the Baronage he could still, by evading the observances of the Ordinances, throw the whole realm into confusion. The six years that follow Gaveston's death are among the darkest in our history. A horrible succession of famines intensified the suffering which sprang from the utter absence of all rule during the dissension between the Barons and the King. The overthrow of Bannockburn, and the ravages of the Scots in the North, brought shame on England such as it had never known. At last the capture of Berwick by Robert Bruce
1318. forced Edward partially to give way, the Ordinances were formally accepted, an amnesty granted, and a small number of peers belonging to the Barons' party added to the great officers of state.

Edward II.

The character of the Earl of Lancaster, who, by the union of the four earldoms of Lincoln, Leicester, Salisbury, and Derby with his own, as well as by his royal blood (for like the King he was a grandson of Henry the Third), stood at the head of the English baronage, and whom the issue of the long struggle with Edward raised for the moment to supreme power in the realm, seems to have fallen far beneath the greatness of his position. Incapable of governing, he could do little but regard with jealousy the new favourite, originally one of his own dependants, whom Edward adopted. The rise of Hugh Le Despenser, on whom the King bestowed the county of Glamorgan with the hand of its heiress, was rapid enough to excite general jealousy, and Lancaster found little difficulty in extorting by force of arms his exile from the kingdom. But the tide of popular sympathy, already wavering, was turned to the royal cause by an insult offered to the Queen, against whom Lady Badlesmere had closed the doors

Digitized by Google

of her castle of Ledes, and the unexpected energy shown by Edward in avenging the insult gave fresh strength to his cause. He found himself strong enough to recall Despenser, and when Lancaster convoked the Baronage to force him again into exile, the weakness of his party was shown by the treasonable negotiations into which he entered with the Scots, and by his precipitate retreat to the North on the advance of the royal army. At Boroughbridge however his forces were arrested and dispersed, and the Earl himself, brought captive before Edward at Pontefract, was ordered instantly to death as a traitor. "Have mercy on me, King of Heaven," cried Lancaster, as 321. mounted on a grey pony without a bridle he was hurried to execution, "for my earthly King has forsaken me." His death was followed by that of a crowd of his adherents and by the captivity of the rest; while a Parliament at York annulled the proceedings against Despenser, and repealed the greater part of the Ordinances. It is to this Parliament however, and perhaps to the victorious confidence of the royalists, that we owe the famous provision that all laws concerning "the estate of the Crown or of the realm and people must be treated, accorded, and established in Parliament by the King, by and with the consent of the prelates, earls, barons, and universality of the realm." There can be little doubt from the tenor of this remarkable enactment that much of the sudden revulsion of popular feeling had been owing to the assumption of all legislative action by the Baronage alone. But the arrogance of Despenser, the utter failure of a fresh campaign against Scotland, and the humiliating truce for fourteen years which Edward was forced to conclude with Robert Bruce, soon robbed the Crown of its temporary popularity, while Edward's domestic vices brought about the sudden catastrophe which closed his disastrous reign. It had been arranged that the Queen, a sister of the King of France, should revisit her home to conclude a treaty between the two kingdoms, whose quarrel was again verging upon war, and his son, a boy of twelve years old, followed her to do homage in his father's stead for the duchy of Guienne. Neither threats nor prayers, however, could induce either wife or child to return, and the Queen's connection with the secret conspiracy of the Baronage was revealed when the primate and nobles hurried to her standard on her landing at Orwell. Deserted by all and repulsed by the citizens of London, whose aid he had implored, the King fled hastily to the Marches of Wales and embarked with his favourite for Lundy Isle, but contrary winds flung the fugitives again on the Welsh coast, where they fell into the hands of the new Earl of Lancaster. Despenser was at once hung on a gibbet fifty feet high, and the King placed in ward at Kenilworth till his fate could be decided by a Parliament summoned for that purpose at Westminster. The peers assembled fearlessly revived the constitutional usage of the earlier English freedom, and asserted their right to depose a king

Digitized by Google

SEC. V.
THE KING AND THE BARONAGE.
1290–1327.

who had proved himself unworthy to rule. Not a voice was raised in Edward's behalf, and only four prelates protested when the young Prince was proclaimed King by acclamation, and presented as their sovereign to the multitudes without. The revolution soon took legal form in a bill which charged the captive monarch with indolence, incapacity, the loss of Scotland, the violation of his coronation oath, and oppression of the Church and Baronage; and on the approval of this it was resolved that the reign of Edward of Caernarvon had ceased and that the crown had passed to his son, Edward of Windsor. A deputation of the Parliament proceeded to Kenilworth to procure the assent of the discrowned King to his own deposition, and Edward, "clad in a plain black gown," submitted quietly to his fate. Sir William Trussel at once addressed him in words which better than any other mark the true nature of the step which the Parliament had taken. "I, William Trussel, proctor of the earls, barons, and others, having for this full and sufficient power, do render and give back to you, Edward, once King of England, the homage and fealty of the persons named in my procuracy; and acquit and discharge them thereof in the best manner that law and custom will give. And I now make protestation in their name that they will no longer be in your fealty and allegiance, nor claim to hold anything of you as king, but will account you hereafter as a private person, without any manner of royal dignity." A significant act followed these emphatic words. Sir Francis Blount, the steward of the household, broke his staff of office, a ceremony only used at a king's death, and declared that all persons engaged in the royal service were discharged.

1327.

### Section VI.—The Scotch War of Independence, 1306–1342.

[*Authorities.*—Mainly the contemporary English Chroniclers and state-documents for the reigns of the three Edwards. "The Bruce" of John Barbour is the great legendary storehouse for the adventures of his hero: but its historical value may be measured by the fact that though born less than twenty years after the King's death he makes Bruce identical with his own grandfather. Mr. Burton's is throughout the best modern account of the time.]

**The Scotch Revolt.**

To obtain a clear view of the constitutional struggle between the kings and their baronage, we have deferred to its close an account of the great contest which raged throughout the whole period in the North.

1305.

With the Convention of Perth the conquest and settlement of Scotland seemed complete. Edward, in fact, was preparing for a joint Parliament of the two nations at Carlisle, when the conquered country suddenly sprung again to arms under Robert Bruce, the grandson of one of the original claimants of the crown. The Norman house of Bruce formed a part of the Yorkshire baronage, but it had acquired through inter-

Digitized by Google

marriages the Earldom of Carrick and the Lordship of Annandale. Both the claimant and his son had been pretty steadily on the English side in the contest with Balliol and Wallace, and Robert had himself been trained in the English Court, and stood high in the King's favour. But the withdrawal of Balliol gave a new force to his claims upon the crown, and the discovery of an intrigue which he had set on foot with the Bishop of St. Andrews so roused Edward's jealousy that Bruce fled for his life across the border. In the church of the Grey Friars at Dumfries he met Comyn, the Lord of Badenoch, to whose treachery he attributed the disclosure of his plans, and after the interchange of a few hot words struck him with his dagger to the ground. It was an outrage that admitted of no forgiveness, and Bruce for very safety was forced to assume the crown six weeks after in the Abbey of Scone. The news roused Scotland again to arms, and summoned Edward to a fresh contest with his unconquerable foe. But the murder of Comyn had changed the King's mood to a terrible pitilessness; he threatened death against all concerned in the outrage, and exposed the Countess of Buchan, who had set the crown on Bruce's head, in a cage or open chamber built for the purpose in one of the towers of Berwick. At the solemn feast which celebrated his son's knighthood Edward vowed on the swan, which formed the chief dish at the banquet, to devote the rest of his days to exact vengeance from the murderer himself. But even at the moment of the vow, Bruce was already flying for his life to the Highlands. "Henceforth," he had said to his wife at their coronation, "thou art queen of Scotland and I king." "I fear," replied Mary Bruce, "we are only playing at royalty, like children in their games." The play was soon turned into bitter earnest. A small English force under Aymer de Valence sufficed to rout the disorderly levies which gathered round the new monarch, and the flight of Bruce left his followers at Edward's mercy. Noble after noble was hurried to the block. The Earl of Athole pleaded kindred with royalty; "His only privilege," burst forth the King, "shall be that of being hanged on a higher gallows than the rest." Knights and priests were strung up side by side by the English justiciaries; while the wife and daughters of Robert himself were flung into Edward's prisons. Bruce himself had offered to capitulate to Prince Edward, but the offer only roused the old King to fury. "Who is so bold," he cried, "as to treat with our traitors without our knowledge?" and rising from his sick-bed he led his army northwards to complete the conquest. But the hand of death was upon him, and in the very sight of Scotland the old man breathed his last at Burgh-upon-Sands.

1306.

1307.

**Robert Bruce.**

The abandonment of his great enterprise by Edward the Second, and the troubles which soon arose between the King and the English barons, were far at first from restoring the fortunes of Robert Bruce. The Earl of Pembroke was still master of the open country, and the

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI.

THE SCOTCH WAR OF INDEPENDENCE. 1306-1342.

Highland chiefs of the West, amongst whom the new king was driven to seek for shelter, were bitterly hostile to the sovereign of the Lowland Scots. For four years Bruce's career was that of a desperate adventurer; but it was adversity which transformed the reckless murderer of Comyn into the noble leader of a nation's cause. Strong and of commanding presence, brave and genial in temper, Bruce bore the hardships of his career with a courage and hopefulness which never failed. In the legends which clustered round his name we see him listening in Highland glens to the bay of the bloodhounds on his track, or holding single-handed a pass against a crowd of savage clansmen. Sometimes the little band of fugitives were forced to support themselves by hunting or fishing, sometimes to break up for safety as their enemies tracked them to their lair. Bruce himself had more than once to fling off his shirt of mail and scramble barefoot for his very life up the crags. Little by little, however, the dark sky cleared. The English pressure relaxed as the struggle between Edward and his barons grew fiercer. James Douglas, the darling of Scotch story, was the first of the Lowland barons to rally again to the Bruce, and his daring gave heart to the royal cause. Once he surprised his own house, which had been given to an Englishman, ate the dinner which had been prepared for its new owner, slew his captives, and tossed their bodies on to a pile of wood gathered at the castle gate. Then he staved in the wine-vats that the wine might mingle with their blood, and set house and woodpile on fire. A terrible ferocity mingled with heroism in the work of freedom, but the work went steadily on. Bruce's "harrying of Buchan" after his defeat of its Earl, who had joined the English in the North, at last fairly turned the tide of success. Edinburgh, Roxburgh, Perth, and most of the Scotch fortresses fell one by one into the King's hands. The clergy met in council and owned Bruce as their lawful lord. Gradually the Scotch barons who still held to the English cause were coerced into submission, and

1313. Bruce found himself strong enough to invest Stirling, the last and the most important of the Scotch fortresses which held out for Edward.

**Bannockburn.** *June* 24, 1314. Stirling was in fact the key of Scotland, and its danger roused England out of its civil strife to a vast effort for the recovery of its prey. Thirty thousand horsemen formed the fighting part of the great army which followed Edward to the North, and a host of wild marauders had been summoned from Ireland and Wales to its support. The army which Bruce had gathered to oppose the inroad was formed almost wholly of footmen, and was stationed to the south of Stirling on a rising ground flanked by a little brook, the Bannock burn which gave its name to the engagement. Again the two systems of warfare, the feudal and the free, were brought face to face, as they had been brought at Falkirk, and the King, like Wallace, drew up his force in solid squares or circles of spearmen. The English were dispirited at

Digitized by Google

the very outset by the failure of an attempt to relieve Stirling, and by the issue of a single combat between Bruce and Henry de Bohun, a knight who had borne down upon him as he was riding peacefully along the front of his army. Robert was mounted on a small hackney and held only a light battle-axe in his hand, but, warding off his opponent's spear, he cleft his skull with so terrible a blow that the handle of the axe was shattered in his grasp. At the opening of the battle the English archers were thrown forward to rake the Scottish squares, but they were without support and were easily dispersed by a handful of horse whom Bruce had held in reserve for the purpose. The great body of men-at-arms next flung themselves on the Scottish front, but their charge was embarrassed by the narrow space along which the line was forced to move, and the steady resistance of the squares soon threw the knighthood into disorder. "The horses that were stickit," says an exulting Scotch writer, "rushed and reeled right rudely." In the moment of failure the sight of a body of camp-followers, whom they mistook for reinforcements to the enemy, spread panic through the English host. It broke in a headlong rout. The thousands of brilliant horsemen were soon floundering in pits which had guarded the level ground to Bruce's left, or riding in wild haste for the border. Few however were fortunate enough to reach it. Edward himself, with a body of five hundred knights, succeeded in escaping to Dunbar and the sea. But the flower of his knighthood fell into the hands of the victors, while the Irishry and the footmen were ruthlessly cut down by the country folk as they fled. For centuries after, the rich plunder of the English camp left its traces on the treasure and vestment rolls of castle and abbey.

**The Independence of Scotland.**

Terrible as was the blow it was long before England could relinquish her claim on the Scottish crown. With equal pertinacity Bruce refused all negotiation while the royal title was refused to him, and steadily pushed on the recovery of the South. Berwick was at last forced to surrender, and held against a desperate attempt at its recapture; while barbarous forays of the borderers under Douglas wasted Northumberland. Again the strife between the Crown and the Baronage was suspended to allow the march of a great English army to the North, but Bruce declined an engagement till the wasted Lowlands starved the invaders into a ruinous retreat. The blow wrested from England a truce for thirteen years, in the negotiation of which Bruce was suffered to take the royal title, but the deposition of Edward II. gave a fresh impulse to the ambition of the English baronage, and Edward Balliol, the son of the former King, was solemnly received at the English Court. Robert was now on his death-bed, but the insult roused him to hurl his marauders again over the border under Douglas and Randolph. Froissart paints for us the Scotch army as he saw it in this memorable campaign. "It consisted of four thousand men-at-arms,

1323.

Digitized by Google

Sec. VI.

The Scotch War of Independence. 1306-1342.

knights and esquires, well mounted, besides twenty thousand men bold and hardy, armed after the manner of their country, and mounted upon little hackneys that are never tied up or dressed, but turned immediately after the day's march to pasture on the heath or in the fields. . . . . They bring no carriages with them on account of the mountains they have to pass in Northumberland, neither do they carry with them any provisions of bread or wine, for their habits of sobriety are such in time of war that they will live for a long time on flesh half-sodden without bread, and drink the river water without wine. They have therefore no occasion for pots or pans, for they dress the flesh of the cattle in their skins after they have flayed them, and being sure to find plenty of them in the country which they invade, they carry none with them. Under the flaps of his saddle each man carries a broad piece of metal, behind him a little bag of oatmeal: when they have eaten too much of the sodden flesh and their stomach appears weak and empty, they set this plate over the fire, knead the meal with water, and when the plate is hot put a little of the paste upon it and a thin cake like a biscuit which they eat to warm their stomachs. It is therefore no wonder that they perform a longer day's march than other soldiers." Against such a foe the heavy-armed knighthood of the English army, which marched under its boy-king to protect the border, was utterly helpless. At one time the army lost its way in the vast border waste; at another all traces of the enemy had disappeared, and an offer of knighthood and a hundred marks was made to any who could tell where the Scotch were encamped. But when found their position behind the Wear proved unassailable, and after a bold sally on the English camp Douglas foiled an attempt at blockading him by a clever retreat. The English levies broke hopelessly up, and a fresh foray on Northumberland forced the English Court to submit to peace. By

1328. the Treaty of Northampton the independence of Scotland was formally recognized, and Bruce acknowledged as its king.

**Scotland and Edward III.**

The pride of England, however, had been too much aroused by the struggle to bear easily its defeat. The first result of the treaty was the overthrow of the Government which concluded it, a result hastened by the pride of its head, Roger Mortimer, and by his exclusion of the rest of the nobles from all share in the administration of the realm. The first efforts of the Baronage were unsuccessful: the Earl of Lancaster, who had risen in revolt, was forced to submission; and the King's uncle, the Earl of Kent, was actually brought to the block, before the young King himself interfered in the struggle. Entering the Council chamber in Nottingham Castle, with a force which

1330. he had introduced through a secret passage in the rock on which it stands, Edward arrested Mortimer with his own hands, hurried him to execution, and assumed the control of affairs. His first care was to restore good order throughout the country, which under

Digitized by Google

the late Government had fallen into ruin, and to free his hands by a peace with France for the troubles which were again impending in the north. Fortune, indeed, seemed at last to have veered to the English side; the death of Bruce only a year after the Treaty of Northampton left the Scottish throne to a child of eight years old, and the internal difficulties of the realm broke out in civil strife. To the great barons on either side the border the late peace involved serious losses, for many of the Scotch houses held large estates in England, as many of the English lords held large estates in Scotland; and although the treaty had provided for their claims, they had in each case been practically set aside. It is this discontent of the barons at the new settlement which explains the sudden success of Edward 1332.
Balliol in his snatch at the Scottish throne. In spite of King Edward's prohibition, he sailed from England at the head of a body of nobles who claimed estates in the north, landed on the shores of Fife, and, after repulsing with immense loss an army which attacked him near Perth, was crowned at Scone while David Bruce fled helplessly to France. Edward had given no aid to the enterprise, but the crisis tempted his ambition, and he demanded and obtained from Balliol an acknowledgment of the abandoned suzerainty. The acknowledgment, however, was fatal to Balliol himself. He was at once driven from his realm, and Berwick, which he had agreed to surrender, was strongly garrisoned. The town was soon besieged, but a Scotch army under the regent Douglas, brother to the famous Sir James, 1333.
advanced to its relief, and attacked the covering force, which was encamped on the strong position of Halidon Hill. The English bowmen, however, vindicated the fame they had first won at Falkirk, and were soon to crown in the victory of Cressy; and the Scotch only struggled through the marsh which covered the English front to be riddled with a storm of arrows, and to break in utter rout. The battle decided the fate of Berwick, and from that time the town remained the one part of Edward's conquests which was preserved by the English crown. Fragment as it was, it was viewed legally as representing the realm of which it had once formed a part. As Scotland, it had its chancellor, chamberlain, and other officers of State; and the peculiar heading of Acts of Parliament enacted for England "and the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed" still preserves the memory of its peculiar position. Balliol was restored to his throne by the conquerors, and his formal cession of the Lowlands to England rewarded their aid. During the next three years Edward persisted in the line of policy he had adopted, retaining his hold over Southern Scotland, and aiding his sub-king Balliol in campaign after campaign against the despairing efforts of the Douglases and other nobles who still adhered to the house of Bruce. His perseverance was all but crowned with success, when the outbreak of war with France saved Scotland by



Digitized by Google

SEC. VI.

THE SCOTCH WAR OF INDEPENDENCE.
1306-1342.

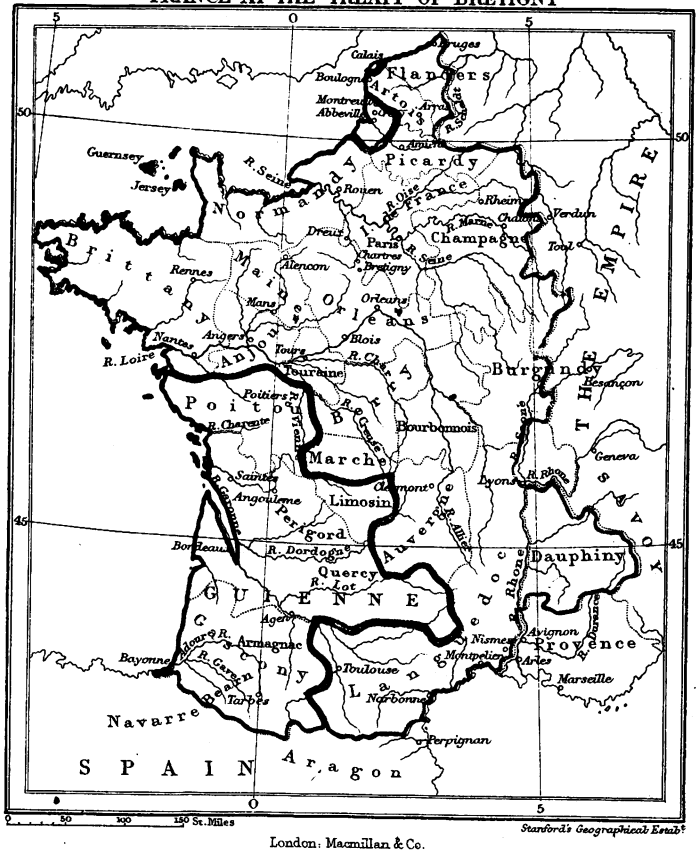
drawing the strength of England across the Channel. The patriot party drew again together. Balliol found himself at last without an adherent and withdrew to the Court of Edward, while David returned to his kingdom, and won back the chief fastnesses of the Lowlands. The freedom of Scotland was, in fact, secured. From a war of conquest and patriotic resistance the struggle died into a petty strife between two angry neighbours, which became a mere episode in the larger contest between England and France.

1339.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

# FRANCE AT THE TREATY OF BRETIGNY




Stanford's Geographical Estab.t

London: Macmillan & Co.

Digitized by Google

# CHAPTER V.

## THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR.

### 1336–1431.

### Section I.—Edward the Third, 1336–1360.

[*Authorities.*—The concluding part of the chronicle of Walter of Heminburgh or Hemingford seems to have been jotted down as news of the passing events reached its author; it ends on the verge of Cressy. Another contemporary account, Robert of Avesbury's history of the "wonderful deeds of Edward the Third" to the year 1356, has been published by Hearne. A third by Knyghton, a canon of Leicester, will be found in Twysden's "Decem Scriptores." At the close of this century and the beginning of the next the successive annals of the Abbey of St. Albans were thrown together by Walsingham in the "Historia Anglicana" which bears his name, the history of whose compilation has been fully explained by Mr. Riley in the prefaces to the "Chronica Monasterii S. Albani," published by the Master of the Rolls. The State documents and negotiations of the period will be found in the Fœdera. For the French war itself our primary authority is the recently discovered chronicle of Jehan le Bel, a canon of S. Lambert of Liége, who had himself served in Edward's campaign against the Scots, and spent the rest of his life at the Court of John of Hainault. ("Jehan le Bel, Chroniques." Edited by M. L. Polain, Brussels. 1863). Up to the Treaty of Bretigny, where it closes, Froissart has done little more than copy this work, making however large additions from his own inquiries, especially in the Flemish and Breton campaigns and the account of Cressy. The history of Froissart's own work has lately been cleared up by Baron Kervyn de Lettenhove. A Hainaulter of Valenciennes, he held a post in Queen Philippa's household from 1361 to 1369; and under this influence produced in 1373 the first edition of his well-known chronicle. A later edition is far less English in tone, and a third version, begun by him in his old age after a long absence from England, is distinctly French in its sympathies. Froissart's vivacity and picturesqueness blind us to the inaccuracy of his details, but as an historical authority he is of no great value. The incidental mention of Cressy and the later English expeditions by Villani in his great Florentine Chronicle, are, on the other hand, of much importance. The best modern account of this period is that by Mr. W. Longman, "History of Edward the Third." Mr. Morley ("English Writers") has treated in great detail of Chaucer.]

---

IN the middle of the fourteenth century the great movement towards freedom and unity which had begun under the last of the Norman Kings seemed to have reached its end, and the perfect fusion of con-



Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
EDWARD THE THIRD.
1336-1360.
England under Edward III.

quered and conquerors into an English people was marked by the disuse, even amongst the nobler classes, of the French tongue. In spite of the efforts of the grammar schools, and of the strength of fashion, English was winning its way throughout the reign of Edward the Third to its final triumph in that of his grandson. "Children in school," says a writer of the earlier reign, "against the usage and manner of all other nations, be compelled for to leave their own language, and for to construe their lessons and their things in French, and so they have since Normans first came into England. Also gentlemen's children be taught to speak French from the time that they be rocked in their cradle, and know how to speak and play with a child's toy; and uplandish (or country) men will liken themselves to gentlemen, and fondell (or delight) with great busyness for to speak French to be told of." "This manner," adds a translator of Richard's time, "was much used before the first murrain (the plague of 1349), and is since somewhat changed; for John Cornewaile, a master of grammar, changed the lore in grammar school and construing from French into English; and Richard Pencriche learned this manner of teaching of him, as others did of Pencriche. So that now, the year of our Lord, 1385, and of the second King Richard after the conquest here, in all the grammar schools of England children learneth French, and construeth and learneth in English." A more formal note of the change thus indicated is found in the Statute of 1362, which orders English to be used in the pleadings of courts of law, because "the French tongue is much unknown." The tendency to a general use of the national tongue told powerfully on literature. The influence of the French romances had everywhere tended to make French the one literary language at the opening of the fourteenth century, and in England this influence had been backed by the French tone of the court of Henry the Third and the three Edwards. But at the close of the reign of Edward the Third the long French romances were translated even for knightly hearers. "Let clerks indite in Latin," says the author of the "Testament of Love," "and let Frenchmen in their French also indite their quaint terms, for it is kindly to their mouths; and let us show our fantasies in such wordes as we learned of our mother's tongue." The new national life afforded nobler material than "fantasies" for English literature. With the completion of the work of national unity had come the completion of the work of national freedom. Under the first Edward the Parliament had vindicated its right to the control of taxation, under the second it had advanced from the removal of ministers to the deposition of a King, under the third it gave its voice on questions of peace and war, controlled expenditure, and regulated the course of civil administration. The vigour of English life showed itself socially in the wide extension of commerce; in the rapid growth of the woollen

Digitized by Google

manufactures after the settlement of Flemish weavers on the eastern coast; in the progress of the towns, fresh as they were from the victory of the craft-guilds; and in the development of agriculture through the rise of the tenant-farmer. It gave nobler signs of its activity in the spirit of national independence and moral earnestness which awoke at the call of Wyclif. New forces of thought and feeling, which were destined to tell on every age of our later history, broke their way through the crust of feudalism in the socialist revolt of the Lollards, and a sudden burst of military glory threw its glamour over the age of Cressy and Poitiers.

**Chaucer.**
1340?-1400?

It is this new gladness of a great people which utters itself in the verse of Geoffrey Chaucer. In spite of a thousand conjectures, we know little of the life of our first great poet. From his own statement we gather that he was born about the middle of the fourteenth century. His death must have taken place about the year of its close. His family, though not noble, seems to have been of some importance, for, from the opening of his career, we find Chaucer in close connexion with the Court. He first bore arms in the campaign of 1359, but he was luckless enough to be made prisoner; and from the time of his release after the treaty of Bretigny he took no further share in the military enterprises of his time. His marriage with a sister of the famous Katherine Swynford, the mistress, and at a later time the wife of John of Gaunt, identified him with the fortunes of the Duke of Lancaster; it was as his adherent that he sate in the Parliament of 1386, and to his patronage that he owed a sinecure office in the Customs and an appointment as clerk of the Royal Works. A mission, which was probably connected with the financial straits of the Crown, carried him in early life to Italy. He visited Genoa and the brilliant court of the Visconti at Milan; at Florence, where the memory of Dante, the "great master," whom he commemorates so reverently in his verse, was still living, he may have met Boccacio; at Padua, like his own clerk of Oxenford, he may have caught the story of Griseldis from the lips of Petrarca. But with these few facts and guesses our knowledge of him ends. In person, the portrait of Occleve, which preserves for us his forked beard, his dark-coloured dress and hood, the knife and pen-case at his girdle, is supplemented by a few vivid touches of his own. The Host in the "Canterbury Tales" describes him as one who looked on the ground as though he would find a hare, as elf-like in face, but portly of waist. He heard little of his neighbours' talk; when labour was over "thou goest home to thine own house anon, and also dumb as a stone. Thou sittest at another book till fully dazed is thy look, and livest thus as an hermite, although thy abstinence is lite (little)." But of this abstraction from his fellows there is no trace in his verse. No poetry was ever more human than Chaucer's; none ever came more frankly and genially home to its

Digitized by Google

readers. The first note of his song is a note of freshness and gladness. "Of ditties and of songes glad, the which he for my sake made, the land fulfilled is over all," says the sober Gower, in his lifetime; and the impression of gladness remains just as fresh now that four hundred years have passed away. The historical character of Chaucer's work lies on its surface. It stands out in vivid contrast with the poetic literature from the heart of which it sprang. The long French romances were the product of an age of wealth and ease, of indolent curiosity, of a fanciful and self-indulgent sentiment. Of the great passions which gave life to the Middle Ages, that of religious enthusiasm had degenerated into the pretty conceits of Mariolatry, that of war into the gorgeous extravagances of Chivalry. Love, indeed, remained; it was the one theme of troubadour and trouveur, but it was a love of refinement, of romantic follies, of scholastic discussions, of sensuous enjoyment—a plaything rather than a passion. Nature had to reflect the pleasant indolence of man; the song of the minstrel moved through a perpetual May-time; the grass was ever green; the music of the lark and the nightingale rang out from field and thicket. There was a gay avoidance of all that is serious, moral, or reflective in man's life: life was too amusing to be serious, too piquant, too sentimental, too full of interest and gaiety and chat. It was an age of talk: "mirth is none," says the host, "to ride on by the way dumb as a stone;" and the Trouveur aimed simply at being the most agreeable talker of his day. His romances, his rhymes of King Horn or Sir Tristram, his Romance of the Rose, are full of colour and fantasy, endless in detail, but with a sort of gorgeous idleness about their very length, the minuteness of their description of outer things, the vagueness of their touch when it passes to the subtler inner world. Nothing is more unreal than the tone of the French romance, nothing more absolutely real than the tone of Chaucer. If with the best modern critics we reject from the list of his genuine works the bulk of the poems which preceded "Troilus and Cressida," we see at once that, familiar as he was with the literature of the Trouveres, his real sympathies drew him not to the dying verse of France, but to the new and mighty upgrowth of poetry in Italy. Dante's eagle looks at him from the sun. "Fraunces Petrark, the laureat poete," is to him one "whose rethorique sweete enlumyned al Itail of poetrie." The "Troilus" is an enlarged English version of Boccacio's "Filostrato," the Knight's Tale of his Teseide. It was, indeed, the "Decameron" which suggested the very form of the "Canterbury Tales." But even while changing, as it were, the front of English poetry, Chaucer preserves his own distinct personality. If he quizzes in the rime of Sir Thopaz the wearisome idleness of the French romance, he retains all that was worth retaining of the French temper, its rapidity and agility of movement, its lightness and brilliancy of touch, its airy mockery, its gaiety and good humour, its

Digitized by Google

critical coolness and self-control. The French wit quickens in him more than in any English writer the sturdy sense and shrewdness of our national disposition, corrects its extravagance, and relieves its somwhat ponderous morality. If, on the other hand, he echoes the joyous carelessness of the Italian tale, he tempers it with the English seriousness. As he follows Boccacio, all his changes are on the side of purity; and when the Troilus of the Florentine ends with the old sneer at the changeableness of woman, Chaucer bids us "look Godward," and dwells on the unchangeableness of Heaven.

**The Canterbury Tales.**

But the genius of Chaucer was neither French nor Italian, whatever element it might borrow from either literature, but English to the core. Of the history of the great poem on which his fame must rest, or of the order in which the "Canterbury Tales" were really written, we know nothing. The work was the fruit of his old age: it was in his last home, the house in the garden of St. Mary's Chapel at Westminster, that Chaucer rested from his labours; and here he must have been engaged on the poem which his death left unfinished. Its story—that of a pilgrimage from London to Canterbury—not only enabled him to string together a number of tales which seem to have been composed at very different times, but lent itself admirably to the peculiar characteristics of his poetic temper, dramatic power, and the universality of his sympathy. His tales cover the whole field of mediæval poetry; the legend of the priest, the knightly romance, the wonder-tale of the traveller, the broad humour of the fabliau, allegory and apologue, all are there. He finds a yet wider scope for his genius in the persons who tell these stories, the thirty pilgrims who start in the May morning from the Tabard in Southwark—thirty distinct figures, representatives of every class of English society, from the noble to the ploughman. We see the "verray perfight gentil knight" in cassock and coat of mail, with his curly-headed squire beside him, fresh as the May morning, and behind them the brown-faced yeoman, in his coat and hood of green, with the good bow in his hand. A group of ecclesiastics lights up for us the mediæval church—the brawny hunt-loving monk, whose bridle jingles as loud and clear as the chapel-bell—the wanton friar, first among the beggars and harpers of the country side—the poor parson, threadbare, learned, and devout ("Christ's lore and His apostles' twelve he taught, and first he followed it himself")—the summoner with his fiery face—the pardoner with his wallet "bret-full of pardons, come from Rome all hot"—the lively prioress with her courtly French lisp, her soft little red mouth, and "Amor vincit omnia" graven on her brooch. Learning is there in the portly person of the doctor of law, rich with the profits of the pestilence—the busy serjeant-of-law, "that ever seemed busier than he was"—the hollow-cheeked clerk of Oxford, with his love of books, and short, sharp sentences that disguise a latent tenderness which breaks

Digitized by Google

out at last in the story of Griseldis. Around them crowd types of English industry; the merchant; the franklin, in whose house "it snowed of meat and drink;" the sailor fresh from frays in the Channel; the buxom wife of Bath; the broad-shouldered miller; the haberdasher, carpenter, weaver, dyer, tapestry-maker, each in the new livery of his craft; and last, the honest ploughman, who would dyke and delve for the poor without hire. It is the first time in English poetry that we are brought face to face not with characters or allegories or reminiscences of the past, but with living and breathing men, men distinct in temper and sentiment as in face or costume or mode of speech; and with this distinctness of each maintained throughout the story by a thousand shades of expression and action. It is the first time, too, that we meet with the dramatic power which not only creates each character, but combines it with its fellows, which not only adjusts each tale or jest to the temper of the person who utters it, but fuses all into a poetic unity. It is life in its largeness, its variety, its complexity, which surrounds us in the "Canterbury Tales." In some of the stories, indeed, composed no doubt at an earlier time, there is the tedium of the old romance or the pedantry of the schoolman; but taken as a whole the poem is the work not of a man of letters, but of a man of action. He has received his training from war, courts, business, travel—a training not of books, but of life. And it is life that he loves—the delicacy of its sentiment, the breadth of its farce, its laughter and its tears, the tenderness of its Griseldis or the Smollett-like adventures of the miller and the schoolboy. It is this largeness of heart, this wide tolerance, which enables him to reflect man for us as none but Shakspeare has ever reflected it, but to reflect it with a pathos, a shrewd sense and kindly humour, a freshness and joyousness of feeling, that even Shakspeare has not surpassed.

It is strange that such a voice as this should have awakened no echo in the singers who follow; but the first burst of English song died as suddenly and utterly with Chaucer as the hope and glory of his age. The hundred years which follow the brief sunshine of Cressy and the "Canterbury Tales" are years of the deepest gloom; no age of our history is so sad and sombre as the age which we traverse from the third Edward to Joan of Arc. The throb of hope and glory which pulsed at its outset through every class of English society died into inaction or despair. Material life lingered on indeed, commerce still widened, but its progress was dissociated from all the nobler elements of national well-being. The towns sank again into close oligarchies; the bondsmen struggling forward to freedom fell back into a serfage which still leaves its trace on the soil. Literature reached its lowest ebb. The religious revival of the Lollard was trodden out in blood, while the Church shrivelled into a self-seeking secular priesthood. In the clash of civil strife political freedom was all but extinguished, and the

Digitized by Google

age which began with the Good Parliament ended with the despotism of the Tudors.

The secret of the change is to be found in the fatal war which for more than a hundred years drained the strength and corrupted the temper of the English people. We have followed the attack on Scotland to its disastrous close, but the struggle ere it ended, had involved England in a second contest, to which, for the sake of clearness, we have only slightly alluded, but to which we must now turn back, a contest yet more ruinous than that which Edward the First had begun. From the war with Scotland sprang the hundred years' struggle with France. From the first, France had watched the successes of her rival in the north, partly with a natural jealousy, but still more as likely to afford her an opening for winning the great southern Duchy of Guienne—the one fragment of Eleanor's inheritance which remained to her descendants. Scotland had no sooner begun to resent the claims of her over-lord, Edward the First, than a pretext for interference was found in the rivalry between the mariners of Normandy and those of the Cinque Ports, which culminated at the moment in a great sea-fight that proved fatal to 8,000 Frenchmen. So eager was Edward to avert a quarrel with France, that his threats roused the English seamen to a characteristic defiance. "Be the King's Council well advised," ran the remonstrance of the mariners, "that if wrong or grievance be done them in any fashion against right, they will sooner forsake wives, children, and all that they have, and go seek through the seas where they shall think to make their profit." In spite, therefore, of Edward's efforts the contest continued, and Philip found an opportunity to cite the King before his court at Paris for wrongs done to his suzerain. Again Edward endeavoured to avert the conflict by a formal cession of Guienne into Philip's hands during forty days, but the refusal of the French sovereign to restore the province left no choice for him but war. The instant revolt of Balliol proved that the French outrage was but the first blow in a deliberate and long-planned scheme of attack; Edward had for a while no force to waste on France, and when the first conquest of Scotland freed his hands, his league with Flanders for the recovery of Guienne was foiled by the refusal of his baronage to follow him on a foreign campaign. Even after the victory of Falkirk, Scotch independence was still saved, as we have seen, for three years by the threats of France and the intervention of its ally, Boniface the Eighth; and it was only the quarrel of these two confederates which allowed Edward to complete its subjection. But the rising under Bruce was again backed by French aid and by the renewal of the old quarrel over Guienne—a quarrel which hampered England through the reign of Edward the Second, and which indirectly brought about his terrible fall. The accession of Edward the Third secured a momentary

1294.

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
EDWARD THE THIRD.
1336-1360.

peace, but the fresh attack on Scotland which marked the opening of his reign kindled hostility anew; the young King David found refuge in France, and arms, money, and men were despatched from its ports to support his cause. It was this intervention of France which foiled Edward's hopes of the submission of Scotland at the very moment when success seemed in his grasp; the solemn announcement by Charles of Valois that his treaties bound him to give effective help to his old ally, and the assembly of a French fleet in the Channel drew the King from his struggle in the north to face a storm which his negotiations could no longer avert.

1336. The two weapons on which Edward counted for success at the opening of the contest thus forced on him were the wealth of England and his claim upon the crown of France. The commerce of the country was still mainly limited to the exportation of wool to Flanders, but the rapid rise of this trade may be conjectured from the fact that in a single year Edward received more than £80,000 from duties levied on wool alone. So fine was the breed of sheep, that the exportation of live rams for the improvement of foreign wool was forbidden by law, though a flock is said to have been smuggled out of the realm shortly after, and to have become the source of the famous merinos of Spain. Up to Edward's time few woollen fabrics seem to have been woven in England, though Flemish weavers had come over with the Conqueror to found the prosperity of Norwich; but the number of weavers' guilds shows that the trade was gradually extending. Edward appears to have taken it under his especial care; at the outset of his reign he invited Flemish weavers to settle in his country, and took the new immigrants, who chose principally Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex for the seat of their trade, under his especial protection. It was on the wealth which England derived from the great development of its commerce that the King relied in the promotion of a great league with Flanders and the Empire, by which he proposed to bring the French war to an end. Anticipating the later policy of Godolphin and Pitt, Edward became the paymaster of the poorer princes of Germany; his subsidies purchased the aid of Hainault, Gueldres, and Juliers; sixty thousand crowns went to the Duke of Brabant, while the Emperor himself was induced by a promise of 3,000 gold florins to furnish 2,000 men-at-arms. Years, however, of elaborate negotiations and profuse expenditure brought the King little fruit save the title of Vicar-General of the Empire on the left of the Rhine; now the Flemings hung back, now his imperial allies refused to move without the Emperor's express consent; and when the host at last
1339. crossed the border Edward found it impossible to bring the French King to an engagement. Philip, meanwhile, was busy in sweeping the Channel and harrying the shores of England; and his threats of invasion were only averted by a naval victory off the Flemish coast, in

Digitized by Google

which Edward in person utterly destroyed for the time the fleet of France. The King's difficulties, however, had at last reached their height. His loans from the great bankers of Florence amounted to half-a-million of our money; his overtures for peace were contemptuously rejected; his claim to the French crown found not a single adherent. To establish such a claim, indeed, was difficult enough. The three sons of Philip le Bel had died without male issue, and Edward claimed as the son of Philip's daughter Isabella. But though her brothers had left no sons, they had left daughters; and if female succession were admitted, these daughters of Philip's sons would precede the son of Philip's daughter. If, on the other hand, as the great bulk of French jurists asserted, only male succession gave right to the throne, then the right of Philip le Bel was exhausted, and the crown passed to the son of his brother Charles, who had in fact peacefully succeeded to it as Charles of Valois. By a legal subtlety, however, while asserting the rights of female succession and of the line of Philip le Bel, Edward alleged that the nearest living male descendant of that King could claim in preference to females who were related to him in as near a degree. Though advanced on the accession of Charles of Valois, the claim seems to have been regarded on both sides as a mere formality; Edward, in fact, did full and liege homage to his rival for his Duchy of Guienne; and it was not till his hopes from Germany had been exhausted, and his claim was found to be useful in securing the loyal aid of the Flemish cities, that it was brought seriously to the front. But a fresh campaign in the Low Countries was as fruitless as its predecessors, and the ruin of the English party in Flanders, through the death of its chief, Van Arteveld, was poorly compensated by a new opening for attack in Britanny, where, of the two rival claimants to the Duchy, one did homage to Philip and the other to Edward.

**Cressy.**

The failure of his foreign hopes threw Edward on the resources of England itself, and it was with an army of thirty thousand men that he landed at La Hogue, and commenced a march which was to change the whole face of the war. His aim was simply to advance ravaging to the north, where he designed to form a junction with a Flemish force gathered at Gravelines, but the rivers between them were carefully guarded, and it was only by throwing a bridge across the Seine at Poissy, and by forcing the ford of Blanche-Tête on the Somme, that Edward escaped the necessity of surrendering to the vast host which was hastening in pursuit. His communications, however, were no sooner secured than he halted at the little village of Cressy in Ponthieu, and resolved to give battle. Half of his army, now greatly reduced in strength, consisted of the light-armed footmen of Ireland and Wales; the bulk of the remainder was composed of English bowmen. The King ordered his men-at-arms to dismount, and drew up his forces on

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
EDWARD THE THIRD.
1336-1360.
*Cressy, August 26, 1346.*

a low rise sloping gently to the south-east, with a windmill on its summit from which he could overlook the whole field of battle. Immediately beneath him lay the reserve, while at the base of the slope was placed the main body of the army in two divisions, that to the right commanded by the young Prince of Wales, that to the left by the Earl of Northampton. A small ditch protected the English front, and behind it the bowmen were drawn up "in the form of a harrow," with small bombards between them "which, with fire, threw little iron balls to frighten the horses"—the first instance of the use of artillery in field warfare. The halt of the English army took Philip by surprise, and he attempted for a time to check the advance of his army, but the disorderly host rolled on to the English front. The sight of his enemies, indeed, stirred the King's own blood to fury, "for he hated them," and at vespers the fight began. Fifteen thousand Genoese crossbowmen, hired from among the soldiers of the Lord of Monaco, on the sunny Riviera, were ordered to begin the attack. The men were weary with the march; a sudden storm wetted and rendered useless their bowstrings; and the loud shouts with which they leapt forward to the encounter were met with dogged silence in the English ranks. Their first arrow-flight, however, brought a terrible reply. So rapid was the English shot, "that it seemed as if it snowed." "Kill me these scoundrels," shouted Philip, as the Genoese fell back; and his men-at-arms plunged butchering into their broken ranks, while the Counts of Alençon and Flanders, at the head of the French knighthood, fell hotly on the Prince's line. For the instant his small force seemed lost, but Edward refused to send him aid. "Is he dead or unhorsed, or so wounded that he cannot help himself?" he asked the envoy. "No, Sir," was the reply, "but he is in a hard passage of arms, and sorely needs your help." "Return to those that sent you, Sir Thomas," said the King, "and bid them not send to me again so long as my son lives! Let the boy win his spurs; for I wish, if God so order it, that the day may be his, and that the honour may be with him and them to whom I have given it in charge." Edward could see, in fact, from his higher ground, that all went well. The bowmen and men-at-arms held their ground stoutly, while the Welshmen were stabbing the horses in the mêlée, and bringing knight after knight to the ground. Soon the great French host was wavering in a fatal confusion. "You are my vassals, my friends," cried the blind King of Bohemia, who had joined Philip's army, to the nobles around him: "I pray and beseech you to lead me so far into the fight that I may strike one good blow with this sword of mine!" Linking their bridles together, the little company plunged into the thick of the combat to fall as their fellows were falling. The battle went steadily against the French: at last Philip himself hurried from the field, and the defeat became a rout: 1,200 knights and 30,000 footmen—

Digitized by Google

a number equal to the whole English force—lay dead upon the ground.

SEC. I.

EDWARD THE THIRD.

1336-1360.

Calais.

"God has punished us for our sins," cries the chronicler of St. Denys, in a passion of bewildered grief, as he tells the rout of the great host which he had seen mustering beneath his abbey walls. But the fall of France was hardly so sudden or so incomprehensible then as the fall of chivalry. The lesson which England had learnt at Bannockburn she taught the world at Cressy. The whole social and political fabric of the Middle Ages rested on a military base, and its base was suddenly withdrawn. The churl had struck down the noble; the bondsman proved more than a match in sheer hard fighting for the knight. From the day of Cressy feudalism tottered slowly but surely to its grave. But to England the day was the beginning of a career of military glory, which, fatal as it was destined to prove to the higher sentiments and interests of the nation, gave it for the moment an energy such as it had never known before. Victory followed victory. A few months after Cressy a Scotch army which had burst into the north was routed at Neville's Cross, and its King, David, taken prisoner; while the withdrawal of the French from the Garonne left England unopposed in Guienne and Poitou. Edward's aim, however, was not to conquer France, but simply to save English commerce by securing the mastery of the Channel. Calais was the great pirate-haven; in one year alone, twenty-two privateers had sailed from its port; while its capture promised the King an easy base of communication with Flanders, and of operations against France. The siege lasted a year, and it was not till Philip had failed to relieve it that the town was starved into surrender. Mercy was granted to the garrison and the people on condition that twelve of the citizens gave themselves unconditionally into the King's hands. "On them," said Edward, with a burst of bitter hatred, "I will do my will." At the sound of the town bell, Jehan le Bel tells us, the folk of Calais gathered round the bearer of these terms, "desiring to hear their good news, for they were all mad with hunger. When the said knight told them his news, then began they to weep and cry so loudly that it was great pity. Then stood up the wealthiest burgess of the town, Master Eustache de S. Pierre by name, and spake thus before all: 'My masters, great grief and mishap it were for all to leave such a people as this is to die by famine or otherwise; and great charity and grace would he win from our Lord who could defend them from dying. For me, I have great hope in the Lord that if I can save this people by my death, I shall have pardon for my faults, wherefore will I be the first of the six, and of my own will put myself barefoot in my shirt and with a halter round my neck in the mercy of King Edward.'" The list of devoted men was soon made up, and the twelve victims were led before the King. "All the host assembled together; there was great press, and many

*Neville's Cross, Oct.* 1346.

1347.

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
EDWARD THE THIRD.
1336-1360.

bade hang them openly, and many wept for pity. The noble King came with his train of counts and barons to the place, and the Queen followed him, though great with child, to see what there would be. The six citizens knelt down at once before the King, and Master Eustache said thus: 'Gentle King, here be we six who have been of the old bourgeoisie of Calais and great merchants; we bring you the keys of the town and castle of Calais, and render them to you at your pleasure. We set ourselves in such wise as you see purely at your will, to save the remnant of the people that has suffered much pain. So may you have pity and mercy on us for your high nobleness' sake.' Certes, there was then in that place neither lord nor knight that wept not for pity, nor who could speak for pity; but the King had his heart so hardened by wrath, that for a long while he could not reply; then he commanded to cut off their heads. All the knights and lords prayed him with tears, as much as they could, to have pity on them, but he would not hear. Then spoke the gentle knight, Master Walter de Manny, and said, 'Ha, gentle sire! bridle your wrath; you have the renown and good fame of all gentleness; do not a thing whereby men can speak any villany of you! If you have no pity, all men will say that you have a heart full of all cruelty to put these good citizens to death that of their own will are come to render themselves to you to save the remnant of their people.' At this point the King changed countenance with wrath, and said, 'Hold your peace, Master Walter! it shall be none otherwise. Call the headsman! They of Calais have made so many of my men die, that they must die themselves!' Then did the noble Queen of England a deed of noble lowliness, seeing she was great with child, and wept so tenderly for pity, that she could no longer stand upright; therefore she cast herself on her knees before her lord the King, and spake on this wise: 'Ah, gentle sire! from the day that I passed over sea in great peril, as you know, I have asked for nothing: now pray I and beseech you, with folded hands, for the love of our Lady's Son, to have mercy upon them.' The gentle King waited a while before speaking, and looked on the Queen as she knelt before him bitterly weeping. Then began his heart to soften a little, and he said, 'Lady, I would rather you had been otherwhere; you pray so tenderly, that I dare not refuse you; and though I do it against my will, nevertheless take them, I give them you.' Then took he the six citizens by the halters and delivered them to the Queen, and released from death all those of Calais for the love of her; and the good lady bade them clothe the six burgesses and make them good cheer."

**Poitiers.**

A great naval victory won over a Spanish pirate fleet which was sweeping the narrow seas completed the work which had begun with the capture of Calais. In Froissart's naval picture we see the King sitting on deck in his jacket of black velvet, his head covered with

Digitized by Google

a black beaver hat which became him well, and calling on his minstrels to play to him on the horn, and on John Chandos to troll out the songs he has brought over from Germany, till the great Spanish ships heave in sight, and a furious struggle begins which ends in their destruction. Edward was now "King of the Sea," but peace with France was as far off as ever. Even the truce which had for eight years been forced on both countries by sheer exhaustion became at last impossible. Edward threw three armies at once on the French coast, but the campaign proved a fruitless one. The "Black Prince," as the hero of Cressy was now styled, alone won a disgraceful success. Northern and central France had by this time fallen into utter ruin; the royal treasury was empty, the fortresses unoccupied, the troops disbanded for want of pay, the country swept by bandits. Only the south remained at peace, and the young Prince led his army of freebooters up the Garonne into "what was before one of the fat countries of the world, the people good and simple, who did not know what war was; indeed, no war had been waged against them till the Prince came. The English and Gascons found the country full and gay, the rooms adorned with carpets and draperies, the caskets and chests full of fair jewels. But nothing was safe from these robbers. They, and especially the Gascons, who are very greedy, carried off everything." The captain of Narbonne loaded them with booty, and they fell back to Bordeaux, "their horses so laden with spoil that they could hardly move." With the same aim of plunder, the Black Prince started the next year for the Loire; but the assembly of a French army under John, who had succeeded Philip of Valois on the throne, forced him to retreat. As he approached Poitiers, however, he found the French, who now numbered 60,000 men, in his path. The Prince at once took a strong position in the fields of Maupertuis, his front covered by thick hedges, and approachable only by a deep and narrow lane which ran between vineyards. The Prince lined the vineyards and hedges with bowmen, and drew up his small body of men-at-arms at the point where the lane opened upon the higher plain where he was encamped. His force numbered only 8,000 men, and the danger was great enough to force him to offer the surrender of his prisoners, and an oath not to fight against France for seven years, in exchange for a free retreat. The terms were rejected, and three hundred French knights charged up the narrow lane. It was soon choked with men and horses, while the front ranks of the advancing army fell back before the galling fire of arrows from the hedgerows. In the moment of confusion a body of English horsemen, posted on a hill to the right, charged suddenly on the French flank, and the Prince seized the opportunity to fall boldly on their front. The English archery completed the disorder produced by this sudden attack; the French King was taken, desperately fighting; and at noontide, when his army

1347-1355.

*Poitiers, Sep. 19, 1356.*

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
EDWARD THE THIRD.
1336-1360.

poured back in utter rout to the gates of Poitiers, 8,000 of their number had fallen on the field, 3,000 in the flight, and 2,000 men-at-arms, with a crowd of nobles, were taken prisoners. The royal captive entered London in triumph, and a truce for two years seemed to give healing-time to France. But the miserable country found no rest in itself. The routed soldiery turned into free companies of bandits, while the captive lords purchased their ransom by extortion which drove the peasantry into universal revolt. "Jacques Bonhomme," as the insurgents called themselves, waged war against the castles; while Paris, impatient of the weakness and misrule of the Regency, rose in arms against the Crown. The rising had hardly been crushed, when Edward again poured ravaging over the wasted land. Famine, however, proved its best defence. "I could not believe," said Petrarch of this time, "that this was the same France which I had seen so rich and flourishing. Nothing presented itself to my eyes but a fearful solitude, an utter poverty, land uncultivated, houses in ruins. Even the neighbourhood of Paris showed everywhere marks of desolation and conflagration. The streets are deserted, the roads overgrown with weeds, the whole is a vast solitude." Both parties were at last worn out. Edward's army had fallen back, ruined, on the Loire, when proposals of peace reached him. By the treaty of Bretigny, the English King waived his claims on the crown of France and on the Duchy of Normandy. On the other hand, his Duchy of Acquitaine, which included Gascony, Guienne, Poitou, and Saintonge, was left to him, no longer as a fief, but in full sovereignty, while his new conquest of Calais remained a part of the possessions of the English crown.

*Treaty of Bretigny, May, 1360.*

## Section II.—The Good Parliament, 1360—1377.

[*Authorities.*—As in the last period: adding the account of the Good Parliament given by an anonymous chronicler in the 22nd vol. of the "Archæologia."]

**The Two Houses.**

If we turn from the stirring but barren annals of foreign warfare to the more fruitful field of constitutional progress, we are at once struck with a marked change which takes place during this period in the composition of Parliament. The division, with which we are so familiar, into a House of Lords and a House of Commons, formed no part of the original plan of Edward the First; in the earlier Parliaments, in fact, each of the four orders of clergy, barons, knights, and burgesses met, deliberated, and made their grants apart from each other. This insolation, however, of the Estates soon showed signs of breaking down. While the clergy, as we have seen, held steadily aloof from any real union with its fellow-orders, the knights of the shire were drawn by the similarity of their social position into a close connexion

Digitized by Google

with the lords. They seem, in fact, to have been soon admitted by the baronage to an almost equal position with themselves, whether as legislators or councillors of the Crown. The burgesses, on the other hand, took little part in Parliamentary proceedings, save in those which related to the taxation of their class. But their position was raised by the strifes of the reign which followed, when their aid was needed by the baronage in its struggle with the Crown; and their right to share fully in all legislative action was asserted in the famous statute of Edward the Second. Gradually too, through causes with which we are imperfectly acquainted, the knights of the shire drifted from their older connexion with the baronage into so close and intimate a union with the representatives of the towns that at the opening of the reign of Edward the Third the two orders are found grouped formally together, under the name of "The Commons." It is difficult to over-estimate the importance of this change. Had Parliament remained broken up into its four orders of clergy, barons, knights, and citizens, its power would have been neutralized at every great crisis by the jealousies and difficulty of co-operation among its component parts. The permanent union of the knighthood and the baronage, on the other hand, would have converted Parliament into the mere representative of an aristocratic caste, and would have robbed it of the strength which it has drawn from its connexion with the great body of the commercial classes. The new attitude of the knighthood, their social connexion as landed gentry with the baronage, their political union with the burgesses, really welded the three orders into one, and gave that unity of feeling and action to our Parliament on which its power has ever since mainly depended. From the moment of this change, indeed, we see a marked increase of parliamentary activity. A crowd of enactments for the regulation of trade, whether wise or unwise, and for the protection of the subject against oppression or injustice, as well as the great ecclesiastical provisions of this reign, show the rapid widening of the sphere of parliamentary action. A yet larger development of their powers was offered to the Commons by Edward himself. In his anxiety to shift from his shoulders the responsibility of the war with France, he referred to them for counsel on the subject of one of the numerous propositions of peace. As yet, however, the Commons shrank from the task of advising the Crown on so difficult a subject as that of State policy. "Most dreaded lord," they replied, "as to your war and the equipment necessary for it, we are so ignorant and simple that we know not how, nor have the power, to devise: wherefore we pray your Grace to excuse us in this matter, and that it please you, with advice of the great and wise persons of your Council, to ordain what seems best to you for the honour and profit of yourself and of your kingdom; and whatsoever shall be thus ordained by assent and agreement for you and your lords



Digitized by Google

SEC. II.

THE GOOD PARLIAMENT. 1360-1377.

we readily assent to, and will hold it firmly established." But while shrinking from so wide an extension of their responsibility, the Commons wrested from the Crown a practical reform of the highest value. As yet their petitions, if granted, had been embodied by the Royal Council in "Ordinances" at the close of the session, when it was impossible to decide whether the Ordinance was in actual accordance with the petition on which it was based. It was now agreed that, on the assent of the Crown to their petitions, they should at once be converted into "statutes," and derive force of law from their entry on the rolls of Parliament.

**The Loss of Acquitaine. 1360-96.**

The political responsibility which the Commons evaded was at last forced on them by the misfortunes of the war. In spite of quarrels in Britanny and elsewhere, peace had been fairly preserved in the nine years which followed the treaty of Bretigny; but the shrewd eye of Charles V., the successor of John, was watching keenly for the moment of renewing the struggle. He had cleared his kingdom of the freebooters by despatching them into Spain, and the Black Prince had plunged into the revolutions of that country only to return from his fruitless victory of Navarete in broken health, and impoverished by the expenses of the campaign. The anger caused by the taxation which this necessitated was fanned by Charles into revolt. He listened, in spite of the treaty, to an appeal from the lords of Gascony, and summoned the Black Prince to his court. "I will come," replied the Prince, "but helmet on head, and with sixty
1369. thousand men at my back." War, however, had hardly been declared before the ability with which Charles had laid his plans was seen in the seizure of Ponthieu, and the insurrection of the whole country south of the Garonne. The Black Prince, borne on a litter to the walls of Limoges, recovered the town, which had been surrendered to the French, and by a merciless massacre sullied the fame of his earlier exploits; but sickness recalled him home, and the war, protracted by the caution of Charles, who had forbidden his armies to engage, did little but exhaust the energy and treasures of Eng-
1372. land. At last, however, the fatal error of the Prince's policy was seen in the appearance of a Spanish fleet in the Channel, and in a decisive victory which it won over an English convoy off Rochelle. The blow was in fact fatal to the English cause, wresting as it did from them the mastery of the seas; and Charles was roused to new exertions. Poitou, Saintonge, and the Angoumois yielded to his general Du Guesclin, while a great army under John of Gaunt penetrated fruitlessly into the heart of France. Charles had forbidden any fighting. "If a storm rages over the land," said the King, coolly, "it disperses of itself; and so will it be with the English." Winter, in fact, overtook the Duke of Lancaster in the mountains of Auvergne, and a mere fragment of his great host reached Bourdeaux. The

Digitized by Google

failure was the signal for a general defection, and ere a year had passed the two towns of Bourdeaux and Bayonne were all that remained of the English possessions in Acquitaine.

It was a time of shame and suffering such as England had never known. Her conquests were lost, her shores insulted, her fleets annihilated, her commerce swept from the sea; while within she was exhausted by the long and costly war, as well as by the ravages of pestilence. In the hour of distress the eyes of the feudal baronage turned greedily on the riches of the Church. Never had her spiritual or moral hold on the nation been less; never had her wealth been greater. Out of a population of little more than two millions, the ecclesiastics numbered between twenty and thirty thousand, owning in landed property alone more than a third of the soil; their "spiritualities" in dues and offerings amounting to twice the royal revenue. The position of the bishops as statesmen was still more galling to the feudal baronage, flushed as it was with a new pride by the victories of Cressy and Poitiers. On the renewal of the war the Bishop of Winchester, William of Wykeham, was at once removed, with other prelates, from the ministry, and their places filled by creatures of the baronage, with John of Gaunt, the King's son, at their head. Heavy taxes were imposed on church lands, and projects of confiscation were openly advocated. But the utter failure of the new administration and the calamities of the war left it powerless before the Parliament of 1376. The action of this Parliament marks a new stage in the character of the natural opposition to the illegal government of the Crown. Till now the task of resistance had devolved on the baronage, and had been carried out through risings of its feudal tenantry; but the misgovernment was now that of the baronage itself. The progress of peace and order had rendered a recourse to warfare odious to the people at large, while the power of the Commons afforded an adequate means of peaceful redress. The old reluctance to meddle with matters of state was roughly swept away by the pressure of the time. The knights of the shire united with the burgesses in a joint attack on the royal council. "Trusting in God, and standing with his followers before the nobles, whereof the chief was John Duke of Lancaster, whose doings were ever contrary," their speaker, Sir Peter de la Mare, denounced the mismanagement of the war, the oppressive taxation, and demanded an account of the expenditure. "What do these base and ignoble knights attempt?" cried John of Gaunt. "Do they think they be kings or princes of the land?" But it was soon discovered that, sick as he was to death, the Black Prince gave his hearty support to the cause of the Commons. Lancaster was forced to withdraw from the Council, and the Parliament proceeded fearlessly in its task of investigation. A terrible list of abuses was revealed, which centred in the infamy of the King himself, who had sunk into

1374.

**The Good Parliament.**

*Good Parliament*, 1376.



Digitized by Google

SEC. II. THE GOOD PARLIAMENT. 1360-1377.

a premature dotage, and was wholly under the influence of a mistress named Alice Perren. She was forced to swear never to return to the King's presence; and the Parliament proceeded to the impeachment and condemnation of two ministers, Lord Latimer and William Lyons, and to the solemn presentation of one hundred and sixty petitions which embodied the grievances of the realm. They demanded the annual assembly of Parliament, and freedom of election for the knights of the shire, whose choice was now often tampered with by the Crown; they protested against arbitrary taxation and Papal inroads on the liberties of the Church; petitioned for the protection of trade, and demanded a vigorous prosecution of the war. The death of the Prince suddenly interrupted the work of reform; Lancaster resumed his power, and by an unscrupulous interference with elections procured the return of a new Parliament, which reversed the Acts of its predecessor. The greed of the triumphant baronage broke out in a fresh strife with the great churchmen who had, whether for their own purposes or not, supported the popular party. William of Wykeham was again dismissed from office, and summoned to Parliament. Fresh projects of spoliation were openly canvassed, and it is his support of these plans of confiscation which first brings us historically across the path of John Wyclif.

1377.

## Section III.—John Wyclif.

[*Authorities.*—In addition to the lives of Wyclif by Lewis and Vaughan, we now possess Dr. Shirley's invaluable account of the Reformer in his preface to the "Fasciculi Zizaniorum" (published by the Master of the Rolls), the documents appended to which are of primary authority for his history and that of his followers. Wyclif's English books have been collected by Mr. Thomas Arnold for the University of Oxford; his Bible has been republished with a valuable preface by Rev. J. Forshall and Sir F. Madden. Milman ("Latin Christianity," vol. vi.) has given a brilliant summary of the Lollard movement.]

**Wyclif.**

Nothing is more remarkable than the contrast between the obscurity of Wyclif's earlier life and the fulness and vividness of our knowledge of him during the twenty years which preceded its close. Born in the earlier part of the fourteenth century, he had already passed middle age when he was appointed to the mastership of Balliol College, in the University of Oxford, and recognized as first among the schoolmen of his day. Of all the scholastic doctors those of England had been throughout the keenest and the most daring in philosophical speculation; a reckless audacity and love of novelty was the common note of Bacon, Duns Scotus, and Ockham, as against the sober and more disciplined learning of the Parisian schoolmen, Albert and Aquinas. But the decay of the University of Paris during the English

Digitized by Google

wars had transferred her intellectual supremacy to Oxford, and in Oxford Wyclif stood without a rival. To his predecessor, Bradwardine, whose work as a scholastic teacher he carried on in the speculative treatises he published during this period, he owed the tendency to a predestinarian Augustinianism which formed the groundwork of his later theological revolt. His debt to Ockham revealed itself in his earliest efforts at Church reform. Undismayed by the thunder and excommunications of the Church, Ockham had not shrunk in his enthusiasm for the Empire from attacking the foundations of the Papal supremacy or from asserting the rights of the civil power. The spare, emaciated frame of Wyclif, weakened by study and by asceticism, hardly promised a Reformer who would carry on the stormy work of Ockham; but within this frail form lay a temper quick and restless, an immense energy, an immovable conviction, an unconquerable pride. The personal charm which ever accompanies real greatness only deepened the influence he derived from the spotless purity of his life. As yet indeed even Wyclif himself can hardly have suspected the immense range of his intellectual power. It was only the struggle that lay before him which revealed in the dry and subtle schoolman the founder of our later English prose, a master of popular invective, of irony, of persuasion, a dexterous politician, an audacious partisan, the organizer of a religious order, the unsparing assailant of abuses, the boldest and most indefatigable of controversialists, the first Reformer who dared, when deserted and alone, to question and deny the creed of the Christendom around him, to break through the tradition of the past, and with his last breath to assert the freedom of religious thought against the dogmas of the Papacy.

**England and the Papacy.**

The attack of Wyclif began precisely at the moment when the Church of the middle ages had sunk to its lowest point of spiritual decay. The transfer of the Papacy to Avignon robbed it of much of the awe in which it had been held, for not only had the Popes sunk into creatures of the French King, but their greed and extortion produced almost universal revolt. The claim of first fruits and annates from all ecclesiastical preferments, the assumption of a right to dispose of all benefices in ecclesiastical patronage, the imposition of direct taxes on the clergy, the intrusion of foreign priests into English livings and English sees, produced a fierce hatred and contempt of Rome which never slept till the Reformation. The people scorned a "French Pope," and threatened his legates with stoning when they landed. The wit of Chaucer flouted the wallet of "pardons hot from Rome." Parliament vindicated the right of the State to prohibit the admission or execution of Papal bulls or briefs within the realm by the Statute of Præmunire, and denied the Papal claim to dispose of benefices by that of Provisors. But the failure of the effort showed the amazing power which Rome had acquired from the unquestioning

*Statutes of Præmunire and Provisors.*

Digitized by Google

SEC. III. JOHN WYCLIF.

submission of so many ages. The Pope waived indeed his right to appoint foreigners; but by a compromise, in which Pope and King combined for the enslaving of the Church, archbishoprics, bishoprics, abbacies, and the wealthier livings still continued to receive Papal nominees. The protest of the Good Parliament is a record of the ill-success of its predecessor's attempt. It asserted that the taxes levied by the Pope amounted to five times the amount of those levied by the King, that by reservation during the life of actual holders he disposed of the same bishopric four or five times over, receiving each time the first fruits. "The brokers of the sinful City of Rome promote for money unlearned and unworthy caitiffs to benefices of the value of a thousand marks, while the poor and learned hardly obtain one of twenty. So decays sound learning. They present aliens who neither see nor care to see their parishioners, despise God's services, convey away the treasure of the realm, and are worse than Jews or Saracens. The Pope's revenue from England alone is larger than that of any prince in Christendom. God gave his sheep to be pastured, not to be shaven and shorn." The grievances were no trifling ones. At this very time the deaneries of Lichfield, Salisbury, and York, the archdeaconry of Canterbury, which was reputed the wealthiest English benefice, together with a host of prebends and preferments, were held by Italian cardinals and priests, while the Pope's collector from his office in London sent twenty thousand marks a year to the Papal treasury.

**England and the Church.**

If extortion and tyranny such as this severed the English clergy from the Papacy, their own selfishness severed them from the nation at large. Immense as was their wealth, they bore as little as they could of the common burthens of the realm. The old quarrel over the civil jurisdiction still lingered on, and the mild punishments of the ecclesiastical courts carried little dismay into the mass of disorderly clerks. Privileged as they were against all interference from the world without, the clergy penetrated by their control over wills, contracts, divorce, by the dues they exacted, as well as by directly religious offices, into the very heart of the social life around them. Thousands of summoners enforced their social jurisdiction, and there were few persons of substance who escaped the vexations of their courts. On the other hand, their moral authority was rapidly passing away; the wealthiest churchmen, with curled hair and hanging sleeves, aped the costume of the knightly society to which they really belonged. We have already seen the general impression of their worldliness in Chaucer's picture of the hunting monk and the courtly prioress, with her love-motto on her brooch. Over the vice of the higher classes they exerted no influence whatever; the King paraded his mistress as a Queen of Beauty through London, the nobles blazoned their infamy in court and tournament. "In those days," says a canon of the time, "arose a great rumour and clamour among the people, that wherever

Digitized by Google

there was a tournament there came a great concourse of ladies of the most costly and beautiful, but not of the best in the kingdom, sometimes forty or fifty in number, as if they were a part of the tournament, in diverse and wonderful male apparell, in parti-coloured tunics, with short caps and bands wound cord-wise round their head, and girdles bound with gold and silver, and daggers in pouches across their body, and then they proceeded on chosen coursers to the place of tourney, and so expended and wasted their goods and vexed their bodies with scurrilous wantonness that the rumour of the people sounded everywhere; and thus they neither feared God nor blushed at the chaste voice of the people." They were not called on to blush at the chaste voice of the Church. The clergy were in fact rent by their own dissensions. The higher prelates were busy with the cares of political office, and severed from the lower priesthood by the scandalous inequality between the revenues of the wealthier ecclesiastics and the "poor parson" of the country. The older religious orders had sunk into mere landowners, while the enthusiasm of the Friars had utterly died away and left a crowd of impudent mendicants behind it. In Oxford itself a fierce schism had for some time divided the secular clergy, who now came to the front of the scholastic movement, from the regulars with whom it had begun. Fitz-Ralf, the Archbishop of Armagh, who had been its Chancellor, attributed to the Friars the decline in the number of academical students, and the University checked by statute their admission of mere children into their orders. Wyclif, at a later time, denounced them as sturdy beggars, and declared formally that "the man who goes alone to a begging Friar is *ipso facto* excommunicate."

**Wyclif and Church Reform.**

Without the warning ranks of the clergy stood a world of earnest men who, like Piers the Ploughman, denounced their worldliness and vice, sceptics, like Chaucer, laughing at the jingling bells of their hunting-abbots, and the brutal and greedy baronage under John of Gaunt, eager to drive the prelates from office and to seize on their wealth. Worthless as the last party seems to us, it was with John of Gaunt that Wyclif allied himself in the first effort he made for the reform of the Church. As yet his quarrel was not with its doctrine, 1366.
but with its practice: it was on the principles of Ockham that he
defended the Parliament's indignant refusal of the "tribute" which 1370.
was claimed by the Papacy, the expulsion of the bishops from office by the Duke of Lancaster, and the taxation of Church lands. But his treatise on "The Kingdom of God" (De Dominio Divino) shows how different his aims really were from the selfish aims of the men with whom he acted. In this, the most famous of his works, Wyclif bases his action on a distinct ideal of society. All authority, to use his own expression, is "founded in Grace." Dominion in the highest 1376
sense is in God alone; it is God who, as the suzerain of the universe,

Digitized by Google

deals out His rule in fief to rulers in their various stations on tenure of their obedience to himself. It was easy to object that in such a case "dominion" could never exist, since mortal sin is a breach of such a tenure, and all men sin. But, as Wyclif urged it, the theory is a purely ideal one. In actual practice he distinguishes between dominion and power, power which the wicked may have by God's permission, and to which the Christian must submit from motives of obedience to God. In his own scholastic phrase, so strangely perverted afterwards, here on earth "God must obey the devil." But whether in the ideal or practical view of the matter, all power or dominion was of God. It was granted by Him not to one person, His Vicar on earth, as the Papacy alleged, but to all. The King was as truly God's Vicar as the Pope. The Royal power was as sacred as the ecclesiastical, and as complete over temporal things, even the temporalities of the Church, as that of the Church over spiritual things. On the question of Church and State therefore the distinction between the ideal and practical view was of little account. His application of the theory of "dominion" to the individual conscience was of far higher and wider importance. Obedient as each Christian might be to king or priest, he himself, as a possessor of "dominion," held immediately of God. The throne of God Himself was the tribunal of personal appeal. What the Reformers of the sixteenth century attempted to do by their theory of Justification by Faith, Wyclif attempted to do by his theory of "dominion." It was a theory which in establishing a direct relation between man and God swept away the whole basis of a mediating priesthood on which the mediæval Church was built; but for a time its real drift was hardly perceived. To Wyclif's theory of Church and State, his subjection of their temporalities to the Crown, his contention that like other property they might be seized and employed for national purposes, his wish for their voluntary abandonment and the return of the Church to its original poverty, the clergy were more sensitive. They were just writhing under the attack on Wykeham by the nobles when the treatise appeared, and in the prosecution of Wyclif, who was regarded as the theological bulwark of the Lancastrian party, they resolved to return blow for blow. He was summoned before Bishop Courtenay of London to answer for his heretical propositions concerning the wealth of the Church. The Duke of Lancaster accepted the challenge as really given to himself,
1377. and stood by Wyclif's side in the Consistory Court at St. Paul's. But no trial took place. Fierce words passed between the nobles and the prelate; the Duke himself was said to have threatened to drag Courtenay out of the church by the hair of his head, and at last the London populace, to whom John of Gaunt was hateful, burst in to their Bishop's rescue. Wyclif's life was saved with difficulty by the aid of the soldiery, but his influence seems to have been unshaken.

Digitized by Google

Papal bulls, which had been procured by the bishops, directing the University to condemn and arrest him, only extorted a bold defiance. In a defence circulated widely through the kingdom and laid before parliament, Wyclif broadly asserted that no man could be excommunicated by the Pope "unless he were first excommunicated by himself." He denied the right of the Church to exact or defend temporal privileges by spiritual censures, declared that a Church might justly be deprived by the king or lay lords of its property for defect of duty, and defended the subjection of ecclesiastics to civil tribunals. Bold as the defiance was, it won him the support of the people and the crown. When he appeared at the close of the year in Lambeth Chapel to answer the Archbishop's summons, a message from the Court forbade the Bishop to proceed, and the Londoners broke in and dissolved the session.

**The First Protestant.**

Wyclif was still working hand in hand with John of Gaunt in advocating his plans of ecclesiastical reform, when the great insurrection of the peasants, which we shall soon have to describe, broke out under Wat Tyler. In a few months the whole of his work was undone. Not only was the power of the Lancastrian party on which Wyclif had relied for the moment annihilated, but the quarrel between the baronage and the Church, on which his action had hitherto been grounded, was hushed in the presence of a common danger. Much of the odium of the outbreak too fell on the Reformer: the Friars charged him with being a "sower of strife, who by his serpent-like instigation has set the serf against his lord," and though Wyclif tossed back the charge with disdain, he had to bear a suspicion which was justified by the conduct of some of his followers. John Ball, who had figured in the front rank of the revolt, was claimed as one of his adherents, and was alleged to have denounced in his last hour the conspiracy of the "Wycliffites." His most prominent scholar, Nicholas Herford, was said to have openly approved the brutal murder of Archbishop Sudbury. Whatever belief such charges might gain, it is certain that from this moment all plans for the reorganization of the Church were confounded in the general odium which attached to the projects of the socialist peasant leaders, and that any hope of ecclesiastical reform at the hands of the baronage and the Parliament was at an end. But even if the Peasant Revolt had not deprived Wyclif of the support of the aristocratic party with whom he had hitherto co-operated, their alliance must have been dissolved by the new position which he had already taken up. Some months before the outbreak of the insurrection, he had by one memorable step passed from the position of a reformer of the discipline and political relations of the Church to that of a protestant against its cardinal beliefs. If there was one doctrine upon which the supremacy of the Mediæval Church rested, it was the doctrine of Transubstantiation. It was by his exclusive right

1381.

Digitized by Google

SEC. III.

JOHN WYCLIF.

to the performance of the miracle which was wrought in the mass that the lowliest priest was raised high above princes. With the formal denial of the doctrine of Transubstantiation which Wyclif issued in the spring of 1381 began that great movement of revolt which ended, more than a century after, in the establishment of religious freedom, by severing the mass of the Teutonic peoples from the general body of the Catholic Church. The act was the bolder that he stood utterly alone. The University, in which his influence had been hitherto all-powerful, at once condemned him. John of Gaunt enjoined him to be silent. Wyclif was presiding as Doctor of Divinity over some disputations in the schools of the Augustinian Canons when his academical condemnation was publicly read, but though startled for the moment he at once challenged Chancellor or doctor to disprove the conclusions at which he had arrived. The prohibition of the Duke of Lancaster he met by an open avowal of his teaching, a confession which closes proudly with the quiet words, "I believe that in the end the truth will conquer." For the moment his courage dispelled the panic around him. The University responded to his appeal, and by displacing his opponents from office tacitly adopted his cause. But Wyclif no longer looked for support to the learned or wealthier classes on whom he had hitherto relied. He appealed, and the appeal is memorable as the first of such a kind in our history, to England at large. With an amazing industry he issued tract after tract in the tongue of the people itself. The dry, syllogistic Latin, the abstruse and involved argument which the great doctor had addressed to his academic hearers, were suddenly flung aside, and by a transition which marks the wonderful genius of the man the schoolman was transformed into the pamphleteer. If Chaucer is the father of our later English poetry, Wyclif is the father of our later English prose. The rough, clear, homely English of his tracts, the speech of the ploughman and the trader of the day, though coloured with the picturesque phraseology of the Bible, is in its literary use as distinctly a creation of his own as the style in which he embodied it, the terse vehement sentences, the stinging sarcasms, the hard antitheses which roused the dullest mind like a whip. Once fairly freed from the trammels of unquestioning belief, Wyclif's mind worked fast in its career of scepticism. Pardons, indulgences, absolutions, pilgrimages to the shrines of the saints, worship of their images, worship of the saints themselves, were successively denied. A formal appeal to the Bible as the one ground of faith, coupled with an assertion of the right of every instructed man to examine the Bible for himself, threatened the very groundwork of the older dogmatism with ruin. Nor were these daring denials confined to the small circle of the scholars who still clung to him; with the practical ability which is so marked a feature of his character, Wyclif had organized, some few years

Digitized by Google

before, an order of poor preachers, "the Simple Priests," whose coarse sermons and long russet dress moved the laughter of the clergy, but who now formed a priceless organization for the diffusion of their master's doctrines. How rapid their progress must have been we may see from the panic-struck exaggerations of their opponents; a few years later every second man you met, they complain, was a Lollard; the followers of Wyclif abounded everywhere and in all classes, among the baronage, in the cities, among the peasantry of the country-side, even in the monastic cell itself.

**Oxford and the Lollards.**

"Lollard," a word which probably means much the same as "idle babbler," was the nickname of scorn with which the orthodox Churchmen chose to insult their assailants. But this rapid increase changed their scorn into vigorous action. Courtenay, now become Archbishop, summoned a council at Blackfriars, and formally submitted twenty-four propositions drawn from Wyclif's works. An earthquake in the midst of the proceedings terrified every prelate but the resolute Primate; the expulsion of ill humours from the earth, he said, was of good omen for the expulsion of ill humours from the Church; and the condemnation was pronounced. Then the Archbishop turned fiercely upon Oxford as the fount and centre of the new heresies. In an English sermon at St. Frideswide's, Nicholas Herford had asserted the truth of Wyclif's doctrines, and Courtenay ordered the Chancellor to silence him and his adherents on pain of being himself treated as a heretic. The Chancellor fell back on the liberties of the University, and appointed as preacher another Wycliffite, Repyngdon, who did not hesitate to style the Lollards "holy priests." and to affirm that they were protected by John of Gaunt. Party spirit meanwhile ran high among the students; the bulk of them sided with the Lollard leaders, and the Carmelite Peter Stokes, who had procured the Archbishop's letters, cowered panic-stricken in his chamber while the Chancellor, protected by an escort of a hundred townsmen, listened approvingly to Repyngdon's defiance. "I dare go no further," wrote the poor Friar to the Archbishop, "for fear of death;" but he soon mustered courage to descend into the schools where Repyngdon was now maintaining that the clerical order was "better when it was but nine years old than now that it has grown to a thousand years and more." The appearance, however, of scholars in arms again drove Stokes to fly in despair to Lambeth, while a new heretic in open Congregation maintained Wyclif's denial of Transubstantiation. "There is no idolatry," cried William James, "save in the Sacrament of the Altar." "You speak like a wise man," replied the Chancellor, Robert Rygge. Courtenay however was not the man to bear defiance tamely, and his summons to Lambeth wrested a submission from Rygge which was only accepted on his pledge to suppress the Lollardism of the University. "I dare not publish them, on fear of death," exclaimed

1382.

Digitized by Google

SEC. III. JOHN WYCLIF.

the Chancellor when Chichele handed him his letters of condemnation. "Then is your University an open *fautor* of heretics," retorted the Primate, "if it suffers not the Catholic truth to be proclaimed within its bounds." The royal council supported the Archbishop's injunction, but the publication of the decrees at once set Oxford on fire. The scholars threatened death against the Friars, "crying that they wished to destroy the University." The masters suspended Henry Crump from teaching, as a troubler of the public peace, for calling the Lollards "heretics." The Crown however at last stepped roughly in to Courtenay's aid, and a royal writ ordered the instant banishment of all favourers of Wyclif, with the seizure and destruction of all Lollard books, on pain of forfeiture of the University's privileges. The threat produced its effect. Herford and Repyngdon appealed in vain to John of Gaunt for protection; the Duke himself denounced them as heretics against the Sacrament of the Altar, and after much evasion they were forced to make a formal submission. Within Oxford itself the suppression of Lollardism was complete, but with the death of religious freedom all trace of intellectual life suddenly disappears. The century which followed the triumphs of Courtenay is the most barren in its annals, nor was the sleep of the University broken till the advent of the New Learning restored to it some of the life and liberty which the Primate had so roughly trodden out.

**The death of Wyclif.**

Nothing marks more strongly the grandeur of Wyclif's position as the last of the great schoolmen, than the reluctance of so bold a man as Courtenay even after his triumph over Oxford to take extreme measures against the head of Lollardry. Wyclif, though summoned, had made no appearance before the "Council of the Earthquake." "Pontius Pilate and Herod are made friends to-day," was his bitter comment on the new union which it proved to have sprung up between the prelates and the monastic orders who had so long been at variance with each other; "since they have made a heretic of Christ, it is an easy inference for them to count simple Christians heretics." He seems indeed to have been sick at the moment, but the announcement of the final sentence roused him to life again. "I shall not die," he is said to have cried at an earlier time when in grievous peril, "but live and declare the works of the Friars." He petitioned the King and Parliament that he might be allowed freely to prove the doctrines he had put forth, and turning with characteristic energy to the attack of his assailants, he asked that all religious vows might be suppressed, that tithes might be diverted to the maintenance of the poor and the clergy maintained by the free alms of their flocks, that the Statutes of Provisors and Præmunire might be enforced against the Papacy that Churchmen might be declared incapable of secular offices, and imprisonment for excommunication cease. Finally, in the teeth of the council's condemnation, he demanded that the doctrine of the Eucha-

Digitized by Google

Sec. III. John Wyclif. 1382.

rist which he advocated might be freely taught. If he appeared in the following year before the Convocation at Oxford, it was to perplex his opponents by a display of scholastic logic which permitted him to retire without any retractation of his sacramental heresy. For the time his opponents seemed satisfied with his expulsion from the University, but in his retirement at Lutterworth he was forging during these troubled years the great weapon which, wielded by other hands than his own, was to produce so terrible an effect on the triumphant hierarchy. An earlier translation of the whole Bible, in part of which he was aided by his scholar Herford, was being revised and brought to the second form, which is better known as "Wyclif's Bible," when death drew near. The appeal of the prelates to Rome was answered at last by a Brief ordering him to appear at the Papal Court. His failing strength exhausted itself in the cold sarcastic reply which explained that his refusal to comply with the summons simply sprang from broken health. "I am always glad," ran the ironical answer, "to explain my faith to any one, and above all to the Bishop of Rome; for I take it for granted that if it be orthodox he will confirm it, if it be erroneous he will correct it. I assume, too, that as chief Vicar of Christ upon earth the Bishop of Rome is of all mortal men most bound to the law of Christ's Gospel, for among the disciples of Christ a majority is not reckoned by simply counting heads in the fashion of this world, but according to the imitation of Christ on either side. Now Christ during His life upon earth was of all men the poorest, casting from Him all worldly authority. I deduce from these premisses, as a simple counsel of my own, that the Pope should surrender all temporal authority to the civil power and advise his clergy to do the same." The boldness of his words sprang perhaps from a knowledge that his end was near. The terrible strain on energies enfeebled by age and study had at last brought its inevitable result, and a stroke of paralysis while Wyclif was hearing mass in his parish church of Lutterworth was followed on the next day by his quiet death.

*Dec.* 31, 1384.

### Section IV.—The Peasant Revolt, 1377—1381.

[*Authorities.*—For the condition of land and labour at this time see the "History of Prices," by Professor Thorold Rogers, the "Domesday Book of St. Paul's" (Camden Society) with Archdeacon Hale's valuable introduction, and Mr. Seebohm's "Essays on the Black Death" (*Fortnightly Review*, 1865). Among the chroniclers Knyghton and Walsingham are the fullest and most valuable. The great Labour Statutes will be found in the Parliamentary Rolls.]

**The English Manor.**

The religious revolution which we have been describing gave fresh impulse to a revolution of even greater importance, which had for a long time been changing the whole face of the country. The manorial

Digitized by Google

system, on which the social organization of every rural part of England rested, had divided the land, for the purposes of cultivation and of internal order, into a number of large estates; in each of which about a fourth of the soil was usually retained by the owner of the manor as his demesne or home-farm, while the remainder was distributed, at the period we have reached, among tenants who were bound to render service to their lord. We know hardly anything of the gradual process by which these tenants had arisen out of the slave class who tilled the lands of the first English settlers. The slave, indeed, still remained, though the number of pure "serfs" bore a small proportion to the other cultivators of the soil. He was still, in the strictest sense, his lord's property; he was bound to the soil, he paid head-money for licence to remove from the estate in search of trade or hire, and a refusal to return on recal by his owner would have ended in his pursuit as a fugitive outlaw. But even this class had now acquired definite rights of its own; and although we still find instances of the sale of serfs "with their litter," or family, apart from the land they tilled, yet, in the bulk of cases, the amount of service due from the serf had become limited by custom, and, on its due rendering, his holding was practically as secure as that of the freest tenant on the estate. But at a time earlier than any record we possess the mass of the agricultural population had risen to a position of far greater independence than this, and now formed a class of peasant proprietors, inferior indeed to the older Teutonic freeman, but far removed from the original serf. Not only had their service and the time of rendering it become limited by custom, not only had the possession of each man's little hut with the plot around it, and the privilege of turning out a few cattle on the waste of the manor, passed from mere indulgences granted and withdrawn at a lord's caprice into rights which could be pleaded at law, but the class as a whole were no longer "in the power of the lord." The claim of the proprietors over peasants of this kind ended with the due rendering of their service in the cultivation of his demesne, and this service might be rendered either personally or by deputy. It was the nature and extent of this labour-rent which determined the rank of the tenants among themselves. The villain, or free tenant, for instance, was only bound to gather in his lord's harvest and to aid in the ploughing and sowing of autumn and Lent, while the cottar, the bordar, and the labourer were bound to aid in the work of the home-farm throughout the year. The cultivation, indeed, of the home-farm, or as it was then called, the demesne, rested wholly with the tenants; it was by them that the great grange of the Lord was filled with sheaves, his sheep sheared, his grain malted, the wood hewn for his hall fire. The extent of these services rested wholly on tradition, but the number of teams, the fines, the reliefs, the heriots which the lord could claim was, at this

Digitized by Google

time, generally entered on the court-roll of the manor, a copy of which became the title-deed of the tenants, and gave them the name of copy-holders, by which they became known at a later period. Disputes were easily settled by the steward of the manor on reference to this roll or on oral evidence of the custom at issue, but a social arrangement, eminently characteristic of the English spirit of compromise, generally secured a fair adjustment of the claims of employer and employed. It was the duty of the lord's bailiff to exact their dues from the tenantry, but his coadjutor in this office, the reeve or foreman of the manor, was chosen by the tenants themselves, and acted as the representative of their interests and their rights.

**The Farmer and the Labourer.**

The first disturbance of the system of tenure which we have described sprang from the introduction of leases. The lord of the manor, instead of cultivating the demesne through his own bailiff, often found it more convenient and profitable to let the manor to a tenant at a given rent, payable either in money or in kind. Thus we find the manor of Sandon leased by the Chapter of St. Paul's at a very early period on a rent which comprised the payment of grain both for bread and ale, of alms to be distributed at the cathedral door, of wood to be used in its bakehouse and brewery, and of money to be spent in wages. It is to this system of leasing, or rather to the usual term for the rent it entailed (feorm, from the Latin *firma*), that we owe the words "farm" and "farmer," the growing use of which from the twelfth century marks the first step in the rural revolution which we are examining. It was a revolution which made little direct change in the manorial system, but its indirect effect in breaking the tie on which the feudal organization of the manor rested, that of the tenant's personal dependence on his lord, and in affording an opportunity by which the wealthier among the tenantry could rise to a position of apparent equality with their older masters, was of the highest importance. This earlier step, however, in the modification of the manorial system, by the rise of the Farmer-class, was soon followed by one of a far more serious character in the rise of the Free Labourer. Labour, whatever right it might have attained in other ways, was as yet in the strictest sense bound to the soil. Neither villain nor serf had any choice, either of a master or of a sphere of toil. The tenant was born, in fact, to his holding and to his lord. But the advance of society and the natural increase of population had for a long time been silently freeing the labourer from this local bondage. The influence of the Church had been exerted in promoting emancipation, as a work of piety, on all estates but its own. The fugitive bondsmen found freedom in a flight to chartered towns, where a residence during a year and a day conferred franchise. The increase of population had a far more serious effect. The numbers of the English people seem to have all but tripled since the Conquest,

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV. THE PEASANT REVOLT. 1377-1381.

and as the law of gavel-kind, which was applicable to all landed estates not held by military tenure, divided the inheritance of the tenantry equally among their sons, the holding of each tenant and the services due from it became divided in a corresponding degree. The labour-rent thus became more difficult to enforce, at the very time when the increase of wealth among the tenantry and the rise of a new spirit of independence made it more burthensome to those who rendered it. It was probably from this cause that the commutation of the arrears of labour for a money payment, which had long prevailed on every estate, gradually developed into a general commutation of services. We have already witnessed the silent progress of this remarkable change in the case of St. Edmondsbury, but the practice soon became universal, and "malt-silver," "wood-silver," and "larder silver" were gradually taking the place of the older personal services on the court-rolls, at the opening of the fourteenth century. Under the Edwards the process of commutation was hastened by the necessities of the lords themselves. The luxury of the time, the splendour and pomp of chivalry, the cost of incessant campaigns, drained the purses of knight and baron, and the sale of freedom to the serf or exemption from services to the villain afforded an easy and tempting mode of refilling them. In this process Edward the Third himself led the way: commissioners were sent to royal estates for the especial purpose of selling manumissions to the King's serfs; and we still possess the names of those who were enfranchised with their families by a payment of hard cash in aid of the exhausted exchequer.

**The Black Death.**

By this entire detachment of the serf from actual dependence on the land, the manorial system was even more radically changed than by the rise of the serf into a copyholder. The whole social condition of the country, in fact, was modified by the appearance of a new class. The rise of the free labourer had followed that of the farmer, labour was no longer bound to one spot or one master: it was free to hire itself to what employer, and to choose what field of employment it would. At the close of Edward's reign, in fact, the lord of a manor had been reduced over a large part of England to the position of a modern landlord, receiving a rental in money from his tenants, and dependent for the cultivation of his own demesne on hired labour; while the wealthier of the tenants themselves often took the demesne on lease as its farmers, and thus created a new class intermediate between the larger proprietors and the customary tenants. The impulse towards a wider liberty given by the extension of this process of social change was soon seen on the appearance for the first time in our history of a spirit of social revolt. A Parliamentary statute of this period tells us that "villains and tenants of lands in villainage withdrew their customs and services

1377.

Digitized by Google

from their lords, having attached themselves to other persons who maintained and abetted them; and who, under colour of exemplifications from Domesday of the manors and villas where they dwelt, claimed to be quit of all manner of services, either of their body or of their lands, and would suffer no distress or other course of justice to be taken against them; the villains aiding their maintainers by threatening the officers of their lords with peril to life and limb, as well by open assemblies as by confederacies to support each other." The copyholder was struggling to become a freeholder, and the farmer (perhaps) to be recognized as proprietor of the demesne which he held on lease. It was while this struggle was growing in intensity that a yet more formidable difficulty met the lords who had been driven by the enfranchisement of their serfs to rely on hired labour. Everything depended on the abundant supply of free labourers, and this abundance suddenly disappeared. The most terrible plague which the world ever witnessed advanced at this juncture from the East, and after devastating Europe from the shores of the Mediterranean to the Baltic, swooped at the close of 1348 upon Britain. The traditions of its destructiveness, and the panic-struck words of the statutes which followed it, have been more than justified by modern research. Of the three or four millions who then formed the population of England, more than one-half were swept away in its repeated visitations. Its ravages were fiercest in the greater towns, where filthy and undrained streets afforded a constant haunt to leprosy and fever. In the burial ground which the piety of Sir Walter Manny purchased for the citizens of London, a spot whose site was afterwards marked by the Charter House, more than fifty thousand corpses are said to have been interred. Nearly sixty thousand people perished at Norwich, while in Bristol the living were hardly able to bury the dead. But the Black Death fell on the village almost as fiercely as on the town. More than one-half of the priests of Yorkshire are known to have perished; in the diocese of Norwich two-thirds of the parishes were left without incumbents. The whole organization of labour was thrown out of gear. The scarcity of hands made it difficult for the minor tenants to perform the services due for their lands, and only a temporary abandonment of half the rent by the landowners induced the farmers to refrain from the abandonment of their farms. For the time cultivation became impossible. "The sheep and cattle strayed through the fields and corn," says a contemporary, "and there were none left who could drive them." Even when the first burst of panic was over, the sudden rise of wages consequent on the enormous diminution in the supply of free labour, though accompanied by a corresponding rise in the price of food, rudely disturbed the course of industrial employments; harvests rotted on the ground,

*The Black Death.* 1348.



Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.
THE PEASANT REVOLT.
1377-1381.
The Statutes of Labourers.
1349.

and fields were left untilled, not merely from scarcity of hands, but from the strife which now for the first time revealed itself between Capital and Labour.

While the landowners of the country and the wealthier craftsmen of the town were threatened with ruin by what seemed to their age the extravagant demands of the new labour class, the country itself was torn with riot and disorder. The outbreak of lawless self-indulgence which followed everywhere in the wake of the plague told especially upon the "landless men," wandering in search of work, and for the first time masters of the labour market; and the wandering labourer or artisan turned easily into the "sturdy beggar," or the bandit of the woods. A summary redress for these evils was found by the Parliament and the Crown in a royal ordinance which was subsequently embodied in the Statute of Labourers. "Every man or woman," runs this famous Act, "of whatsoever condition, free or bond, able in body, and within the age of threescore years, . . . and not having of his own whereof he may live, nor land of his own about the tillage of which he may occupy himself, and not serving any other, shall be bound to serve the employer who shall require him to do so, and shall take only the wages which were accustomed to be taken in the neighbourhood where he is bound to serve" two years before the plague began. A refusal to obey was punished by imprisonment. Sterner measures were soon found to be necessary. Not only was the price of labour fixed by the Parliament of 1350, but the labour class was once more tied to the soil. The labourer was forbidden to quit the parish where he lived in search of better-paid employment; if he disobeyed he became a "fugitive," and subject to imprisonment at the hands of the justices of the peace. To enforce such a law literally must have been impossible, for corn had risen to so high a price that a day's labour at the old wages would not have purchased wheat enough for a man's support. But the landowners did not flinch from the attempt. The repeated re-enactment of the law shows the difficulty of applying it and the stubbornness of the struggle which it brought about. The fines and forfeitures which were levied for infractions of its provisions formed a large source of royal revenue, but so ineffectual were the original penalties that the runaway labourer was at last ordered to be branded with a hot iron on the forehead, while the harbouring of serfs in towns was rigorously put down. Nor was it merely the existing class of free labourers which was attacked by this reactionary movement. Not only was the process of emancipation suddenly checked, but the ingenuity of the lawyers, who were employed as stewards of each manor, was recklessly exercised in cancelling on grounds of informality manumissions and exemptions which had passed without question, and in bringing back the villain and the serf into a bondage from which they held themselves freed. The

Digitized by Google

attempt was the more galling that the cause had to be pleaded in the manor-court itself, and to be decided by the very officer whose interest it was to give judgment in favour of his lord. We can see the growth of a fierce spirit of resistance through the statutes which strove in vain to repress it. In the towns, where the system of forced labour was applied with even more rigour than in the country, strikes and combinations became frequent among the lower craftsmen. In the country the free labourers found allies in the villains whose freedom from manorial service was questioned, and throughout Kent and the eastern counties the gatherings of "fugitive serfs" were supported by an organized resistance and by large contributions of money on the part of the wealthier tenantry. The cry of the poor found a terrible utterance in the words of "a mad priest of Kent," as the courtly Froissart calls him, who had for twenty years been preaching a Lollardry of coarser and more popular type than that of Wyclif, and who found audience for his sermons in defiance of interdict and imprisonment in the stout yeomen who gathered in the Kentish churchyards. "Mad" as the landowners called him, it was in the preaching of John Ball that England first listened to the knell of feudalism and the declaration of the rights of man. "Good people," cried the preacher, "things will never go well in England so long as goods be not in common, and so long as there be villains and gentlemen. By what right are they whom we call lords greater folk than we? On what grounds have they deserved it? Why do they hold us in serfage? If we all came of the same father and mother, of Adam and Eve, how can they say or prove that they are better than we, if it be not that they make us gain for them by our toil what they spend in their pride? They are clothed in velvet, and warm in their furs and their ermines, while we are covered with rags. They have wine and spices and fair bread; and we oat-cake and straw, and water to drink. They have leisure and fine houses; we have pain and labour, the rain and the wind in the fields. And yet it is of us and of our toil that these men hold their state." It was the tyranny of property that then as ever roused the defiance of socialism. A spirit fatal to the whole system of the Middle Ages breathed in the popular rhyme which condensed the levelling doctrine of John Ball: "When Adam delved and Eve span, who was then the gentleman?"

The rhyme was running from lip to lip when a fresh instance of public oppression fanned the smouldering discontent into a flame. Edward the Third died in a dishonoured old age, robbed on his death-bed even of his finger-rings by the vile mistress to whom he had clung, and the accession of the child of the Black Prince, Richard the Second, revived the hopes of what in a political sense we must still call the popular party in the Legislature. The Parliament of 1377

1377.



Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.
THE PEASANT REVOLT.
1377-1381.

resumed its work of reform, and boldly assumed the control of the expenditure by means of a standing committee of two burgesses of London: that of 1378 demanded and obtained an account of the mode in which its subsidies had been spent. But the real strength of these assemblies was directed, as we have seen, to the desperate struggle in which the proprietary classes, whom they exclusively represented, were striving to reduce the labourer into a fresh serfage. Meanwhile the shame of defeat abroad was added to the misery and discord at home. The French war ran its disastrous course: one English fleet was beaten by the Spaniards, a second sunk by a storm; and a campaign in the heart of France ended, like its predecessors, in disappointment and ruin. 1378. It was to defray the cost of these failures that the Parliament granted a fresh subsidy, to be raised by means of a poll-tax on every person in the realm. To such a tax the poorest man contributed as large a sum as the wealthiest, and the gross injustice of such an exaction set England on fire from sea to sea. In the eastern counties its levy gathered crowds of peasants together, armed with clubs, rusty swords, and bows; the royal commissioners sent to repress the tumult were driven from the field, and a party of insurgents in Essex gave the signal for open revolt by crossing the Thames under Jack Straw and calling Kent to arms. Canterbury, where "the whole town was of their sort," threw open its gates, plundered the Archbishop's palace, and dragged John Ball from its prison, while a hundred thousand Kentish-men gathered round Wat Tyler, a soldier who had served in the French wars, and who was at once recognized as the head of the insurrection. Quaint rhymes passed through the country, and served as summons to the revolt, which soon extended from the eastern and midland counties over all England south of the Thames. *June*, 1381. "John Ball," ran one, "greeteth you all, and doth for to understand he hath rung your bell. Now right and might, will and skill, God speed every dele." "Help truth," ran another, "and truth shall help you! Now reigneth pride in price, and covetise is counted wise, and lechery withouten shame, and gluttony withouten blame. Envy reigneth with treason, and sloth is take in great season. God do bote, for now is tyme!" We recognize Ball's hand in the yet more stirring missives of "Jack the Miller" and "Jack the Carter." "Jack Miller asketh help to turn his mill aright. He hath grounden small, small: the King's Son of Heaven he shall pay for all. Look thy mill go aright with the four sailes, and the post stand with steadfastness. With right and with might, with skill and with will; let might help right, and skill go before will, and right before might, so goeth our mill aright." "Jack Carter," ran the companion missive, "prays you all that ye make a good end of that ye have begun, and do well, and aye better and better: for at the even men heareth the

Digitized by Google

day." "Falseness and guile," sang Jack Trewman, "have reigned too long, and truth hath been set under a lock, and falseness and guile reigneth in every stock. No man may come truth to, but if he sing 'si dedero.' True love is away: that was so good, and clerks for wealth work them woe. God do bote, for now is tyme." In the rude jingle of these lines began for England the literature of political controversy: they are the first predecessors of the pamphlets of Milton and of Burke. Rough as they are, they express clearly enough the mingled passions which met in the revolt of the peasants: their longing for a right rule, for plain and simple justice; their scorn of the immorality of the nobles and the infamy of the court; their resentment at the perversion of the law to the cause of oppression. The revolt spread like wildfire over the country: Norfolk and Suffolk, Cambridge and Hertfordshire rose in arms: from Sussex and Surrey the insurrection extended as far as Winchester and Somerset. But the strength of the rising lay in the Kentish-men, who were marching on London. As they poured on to Blackheath, every lawyer who fell into their hands was put to death; "not till all these were killed would the land enjoy its old freedom again," the peasants shouted as they fired the houses of the stewards and flung the records of the manor-courts into the flames. The whole population joined them as they marched along, while the nobles were paralyzed with fear, and the Duke of Lancaster fled before the popular hatred over the border, and took refuge in Scotland. The young King—he was but a boy of sixteen—addressed them from a boat on the river; but the refusal of his Council under the guidance of Archbishop Sudbury to allow him to land kindled the peasants to fury, and with cries of "Treason" the great mass rushed on London. Its gates were flung open by the poorer artisans within the city, and the stately palace of John of Gaunt at the Savoy, the new inn of the lawyers at the Temple, the houses of the foreign merchants, were soon in a blaze. But the insurgents, as they proudly boasted, were "seekers of truth and justice, not thieves or robbers," and a plunderer found carrying off a silver vessel from the sack of the Savoy was flung with his spoil into the flames. The general terror was shown ludicrously enough on the following day, when a daring band of peasants, under Tyler himself, forced their way into the Tower, and taking the panic-stricken knights of the garrison in rough horse-play by the beard, promised to be their equals and good comrades in the time to come. But the horse-play changed into dreadful earnest when Archbishop Sudbury and some of the ministers who had hindered the King from a conference with the peasants were discovered in the chapel; the primate was dragged from his sanctuary and beheaded on Tower Hill, and the same vengeance was wreaked on the treasurer and the chief commissioner in the levy of the hated poll-tax. Meanwhile the King

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.
THE PEASANT REVOLT.
1377-1381.

found the mass of the peasants waiting for a conference with him without the city at Mile-End. "I am your King and Lord, good people," the boy began with a fearlessness which marked his whole bearing throughout the crisis; "what will ye?" "We will that you free us for ever," shouted the peasants, "us and our lands; and that we be never named nor held for serfs." "I grant it," replied Richard; and he bade them go home, pledging himself at once to issue charters of freedom and amnesty. A shout of joy welcomed the promise. Throughout the day more than thirty clerks were busied writing letters of pardon and emancipation, and with these the mass of the insurgents dispersed quietly to their homes. It was with such a charter that William Grindecobbe returned to St. Albans, and breaking at the head of the townsmen into the abbey precincts, summoned the abbot to deliver up the charters which bound the town in serfage to his house. But a more striking proof of its servitude remained in the millstones, which after a long suit at law had been surrendered to the abbey, and placed within its cloister as a triumphant witness that no burgess held the right of grinding corn within the bounds of its domain. The men of St. Albans now burst the cloister gates, and tearing the millstones from the floor, broke them into small pieces, "like blessed bread in church," so that each might have something to show of the day when their freedom was won again.

**Suppression of the Revolt.**

Thirty thousand peasants, however, still remained with Wat Tyler to watch over the fulfilment of the royal pledge, and it was this body which Richard by a mere chance encountered the next morning at Smithfield. Hot words passed between his train and the peasant leader, who had advanced to a fresh conference with the King; and a threat brought on a brief scuffle in which the Mayor of London, William Walworth, struck Tyler with his dagger to the ground. "Kill, kill," shouted the crowd, "they have killed our Captain." "What need ye, my masters?" cried the boy King, as he rode boldly to the front, "I am your Captain and your King! Follow me." The hopes of the peasants centred in the young sovereign: one object of their rising had been to free him from the evil counsellors who, as they believed, abused his youth, and they now followed him with a touching loyalty and trust to the Tower. His mother welcomed him with tears of joy. "Rejoice and praise God," the boy answered, "for I have recovered to-day my heritage which was lost, and the realm of England." The panic of the nobles had in fact passed away, and six thousand knights gathered round the King, eager for blood, but Richard was as yet true to his word; he contented himself with issuing the promised letters of freedom and dismissing the peasants to their homes. The revolt, indeed, was far from being at an end. A strong body of peasants occupied St. Albans. In the eastern

Digitized by Google

counties fifty thousand men forced the gates of St. Edmundsbury and wrested from the trembling monks a charter of enfranchisement for the town. Littester, a dyer of Norwich, headed a strong mass of peasants, under the title of the King of the Commons, and compelled the nobles he captured to act as his meat-tasters and to serve him on their knees during his repast. But the death of Tyler gave courage to the nobles, while it seems to have robbed the action of the peasants of all concert and decision. The warlike Bishop of Norwich fell lance in hand on the rebel camp in his own diocese, and scattered them at the first shock: while the King, with an army of 40,000 men, spread terror by the ruthlessness of his executions as he marched in triumph through Kent and Essex. But the stubbornness of the resistance which he met showed the temper of the people. The villagers of Billericay demanded from the King the same liberties as their lords, and on his refusal threw themselves into the woods and fought two hard fights before they were reduced to submission. It was only by threats of death that verdicts of guilty could be wrung from the Essex jurors when the leaders of the revolt were brought before them. Grindecobbe was offered his life if he would persuade his followers at St. Albans to restore the charters they had wrung from the monks. He turned bravely to his fellow-townsmen and bade them take no thought for his trouble. "If I die," he said, "I shall die for the cause of the freedom we have won, counting myself happy to end my life by such a martyrdom. Do then to-day as you would have done had I been killed yesterday." But the stubborn will of the conquered was met by as stubborn a will in their conquerors. The royal council indeed showed its sense of the danger of a mere policy of resistance by submitting the question of enfranchisement to the Parliament which assembled on the suppression of the revolt with words which suggested a compromise. "If you desire to enfranchise and set at liberty the said serfs," ran the royal message, "by your common assent, as the King has been informed that some of you desire, he will consent to your prayer." But no thoughts of compromise influenced the landowners in their reply. The King's grant and letters, the Parliament answered with perfect truth, were legally null and void: their serfs were their goods, and the King could not take their goods from them but by their own consent. "And this consent," they ended, "we have never given and never will give, were we all to die in one day."

Digitized by Google

SEC. V.
RICHARD THE SECOND.
1381–1399.

## Section V.—Richard the Second, 1381–1399.

[*Authorities.*—The "Annales Ricardi Secundi et Henrici Quarti," published by the Master of the Rolls (in "Trokelowe et Anon. Chronica") form the basis for this period of the St. Albans compilation which passes under the name of Walsingham, and from which the Life of Richard by the Monk of Evesham is for the most part derived. The same violent Lancastrian sympathy runs through Walsingham and the fifth book of Knyghton's Chronicle, a work which we probably owe, not to Knyghton himself, but to a contemporary canon of Leicester. The French authorities, on the other hand, are vehemently on Richard's side. Froissart, who ends at this time, is supplemented by the metrical history of Creton (in Archæologia, vol. xx.) and the "Chronique de la Traison et Mort de Richard" (English Historical Society), both the works of French authors, and published in France in the time of Henry the Fourth, probably with the aim of arousing French feeling against the policy of invasion which had been revived by the House of Lancaster. For the popular feeling in England we may consult Mr. Wright's "Political Songs from Edward III. to Richard III." (Master of Rolls' Series). The Fœdera and Rolls of Parliament are indispensable for this period: its constitutional importance has been ably illustrated by Mr. Hallam ("Middle Ages"). The poem of William Longland, the "Complaint of Piers the Ploughman" (admirably edited by Mr. Skeat for the Early English Text Society), throws a flood of light on the social condition of England at the time; we owe to the same author a poem on "The Deposition of Richard II.," which has been published by the Camden Society. The best modern work on Richard the Second is that of M. Wallon ("Richard II." Paris, 1864).

---

**Piers the Ploughman.**

All the darker and sterner aspects of the age which we have been viewing, its social revolt, its moral and religious awakening, the misery of the peasant, the protest of the Lollard, are painted with a terrible fidelity in the poem of William Longland. Nothing brings more vividly home to us the social chasm which in the fourteenth century severed the rich from the poor than the contrast between the "Complaint of Piers the Ploughman" and the "Canterbury Tales." The world of wealth and ease and laughter through which the courtly Chaucer moves with eyes downcast as in a pleasant dream is a far-off world of wrong and of ungodliness to the gaunt poet of the poor. Born probably in Shropshire, where he had been put to school and received minor orders as a clerk, "Long Will," as Longland was nicknamed for his tall stature, found his way at an early age to London, and earned a miserable livelihood there by singing placebos and diriges in the stately funerals of his day. Men took the silent moody clerk for a madman; his bitter poverty quickened the defiant pride that made him loth—as he tells us—to bow to the gay lords and dames who rode decked in silver and minivere along the Cheap, or to exchange a "God save you" with the law serjeants as he passed their new house in the Temple. His world is the world of the poor: he dwells on the poor

Digitized by Google

man's life, on his hunger and toil, his rough revelry and his despair with the narrow intensity of a man who has no outlook beyond it. The narrowness, the misery, the monotony of the life he paints reflect themselves in his verse. It is only here and there that a love of nature or a grim earnestness of wrath quicken his rhyme into poetry; there is not a gleam of the bright human sympathy of Chaucer, of his fresh delight in the gaiety, the tenderness, the daring of the world about him, of his picturesque sense of even its coarsest contrasts, of his delicate irony, of his courtly wit. The cumbrous allegory, the tedious platitudes, the rhymed texts from Scripture which form the staple of Longland's work, are only broken here and there by phrases of a shrewd common sense, by bitter outbursts, by pictures of a broad Hogarthian humour. What chains one to the poem is its deep undertone of sadness: the world is out of joint and the gaunt rhymer who stalks silently along the Strand has no faith in his power to put it right. His poem covers indeed an age of shame and suffering such as England had never known, for if its first brief sketch appeared two years after the Peace of Bretigny its completion may be dated at the close of the reign of Edward the Third, and its final issue preceded but by a single year the Peasant Revolt. Londoner as he is, Will's fancy flies far from the sin and suffering of the great city to a May-morning in the Malvern Hills. "I was very forwandered and went me to rest under a broad bank by a burn side, and as I lay and leaned and looked in the water I slumbered in a sleeping, it sweyved (sounded) so merry." Just as Chaucer gathers the typical figures of the world he saw into his pilgrim train, so the dreamer gathers into a wide field his army of traders and chafferers, of hermits and solitaries, of minstrels, "japers and jinglers," bidders and beggars, ploughmen that "in setting and in sowing swonken (toil) full hard," pilgrims "with their wenches after," weavers and labourers, burgess and bondman, lawyer and scrivener, court-haunting bishops, friars, and pardoners "parting the silver" with the parish priest. Their pilgrimage is not to Canterbury, but to Truth; their guide to Truth neither clerk nor priest but Peterkin the Ploughman, whom they find ploughing in his field. He it is who bids the knight no more wrest gifts from his tenant nor misdo with the poor. "Though he be thine underling here, well may hap in heaven that he be worthier set and with more bliss than thou. . . . For in charnel at church churles be evil to know, or a knight from a knave there." The gospel of equality is backed by the gospel of labour. The aim of the Ploughman is to work, and to make the world work with him. He warns the labourer as he warns the knight. Hunger is God's instrument in bringing the idlest to toil, and Hunger waits to work her will on the idler and the waster. On the eve of the great struggle between wealth and labour, Longland stands alone in his fairness to both, in his shrewd

1362-1380.

Digitized by Google

political and religious common sense. In the face of the popular hatred towards John of Gaunt, he paints the Duke in a famous apologue as the cat who, greedy as she might be, at any rate keeps the noble rats from utterly devouring the mice of the people. The poet is loyal to the Church, but his pilgrimage is not to Walsingham, but to Truth; he proclaims a righteous life to be better than a host of indulgences, and God sends His pardon to Piers when priests dispute it. But he sings as a man conscious of his loneliness and without hope. It is only in a dream that he sees Corruption, "Lady Meed," brought to trial, and the world repenting at the preaching of Reason. In the waking life Reason finds no listeners. The poet himself is looked upon—he tells us bitterly—as a madman. There is a terrible despair in the close of his later poem, where the triumph of Christ is only followed by the reign of Antichrist; where Contrition slumbers amidst the revel of Death and Sin; and Conscience, hard beset by Pride and Sloth, rouses himself with a last effort, and seizing his pilgrim staff wanders over the world to find Piers Ploughman.

**The Social Strife.**

The strife indeed which Longland would have averted raged only the fiercer after the repression of the Peasant Revolt. The Statutes of Labourers, effective as they proved in sowing hatred between rich and poor, and in creating a mass of pauperism for later times to deal with, were powerless for their immediate ends, either in reducing the actual rate of wages or in restricting the mass of floating labour to definite areas of employment. During the century and a half after the Peasant Revolt villainage died out so rapidly that it became a rare and antiquated thing. A hundred years after the Black Death, we learn from a high authority that the wages of an English labourer "commanded twice the amount of the necessaries of life which could have been obtained for the wages paid under Edward the Third." The statement is corroborated by the incidental descriptions of the life of the working classes which we find in Piers Ploughman. Labourers, Longland tells us, "that have no land to live on but their hands," disdained to live on penny ale or bacon, but demanded "fresh flesh or fish, fried or bake, and that hot or hotter for chilling of their maw." The market was still in fact in the labourer's hands, in spite of statutes; "and but if he be highly hired else will he chide and wail the time that he was made a workman." The poet saw clearly that as population rose to its normal rate times such as these would pass away. "Whiles Hunger was their master here would none of them chide nor strive against *his* statute, so sternly he looked: and I warn you, workmen, win while ye may, for Hunger hitherward hasteth him fast." But even at the time when he wrote there were seasons of the year during which employment for this floating mass of labour was hard to find. In the long interval between harvest-tide and harvest-tide, work and food were alike scarce in the mediæval homestead. "I have no penny,"

Digitized by Google

says Piers the Ploughman in such a season, in lines which give us the picture of a farm of the day, "pullets for to buy, nor neither geese nor pigs, but two green cheeses, a few curds and cream, and an oaten cake, and two loaves of beans and bran baken for my children. I have no salt bacon nor no cooked meat collops for to make, but I have parsley and leeks and many cabbage plants, and eke a cow and a calf, and a cart-mare to draw a-field my dung while the drought lasteth, and by this livelihood we must all live till Lammas-tide (August), and by that I hope to have harvest in my croft." But it was not till Lammas-tide that high wages and the new corn bade "Hunger go to sleep," and during the long spring and summer the free labourer, and the "waster that will not work but wander about, that will eat no bread but the finest wheat, nor drink but of the best and brownest ale," was a source of social and political danger. "He grieveth him against God and grudgeth against Reason, and then curseth he the King and all his Council after such law to allow labourers to grieve." The terror of the landowners expressed itself in legislation which was a fitting sequel of the Statutes of Labourers. They forbade the child of any tiller of the soil to be apprenticed in a town. They prayed Richard to ordain "that no bondman nor bondwoman shall place their children at school, as has been done, so as to advance their children in the world by their going into the Church." The new colleges which were being founded at the two Universities at this moment closed their gates upon villains. It was the failure of such futile efforts to effect their aim which drove the energy of the great proprietors into a new direction, and in the end revolutionized the whole agricultural system of the country. Sheep farming required fewer hands than tillage, and the scarcity and high price of labour tended to throw more and more land into sheep-farms. In the decrease of personal service, as villainage died away, it became the interest of the lord to diminish the number of tenants on his estate as it had been before his interest to maintain it, and he did this by massing the small allotments together into larger holdings. By this course of eviction the number of the free-labour class was enormously increased while the area of employment was diminished; and the social danger from vagabondage and the "sturdy beggar" grew every day greater till it brought about the despotism of the Tudors.

**Lollardry.**

This social danger mingled with the yet more formidable religious peril which sprang from the party violence of the later Lollardry. The persecution of Courtenay had deprived the religious reform of its more learned adherents and of the support of the University, while Wyclif's death had robbed it of its head at a moment when little had been done save a work of destruction. From that moment Lollardism ceased to be in any sense an organized movement, and crumbled into

Digitized by Google

SEC. V.
RICHARD THE SECOND.
1381-1399.

a general spirit of revolt. All the religious and social discontent of the times floated instinctively to this new centre; the socialist dreams of the peasantry, the new and keener spirit of personal morality, the hatred of the friars, the jealousy of the great lords towards the prelacy, the fanaticism of the Puritan zealot were blended together in a common hostility to the Church and a common resolve to substitute personal religion for its dogmatic and ecclesiastical system. But it was this want of organization, this looseness and fluidity of the new movement, that made it penetrate through every class of society. Women as well as men became the preachers of the new sect. Its numbers increased till to the frenzied panic of the Churchmen it seemed as if every third man in the streets was a Lollard. The movement had its own schools, its own books; its pamphlets were passed everywhere from hand to hand; scurrilous ballads, in which it revived old attacks of "Golias" in the Angevin times upon the wealth and luxury of the clergy were sung at every corner. Nobles, like the Earl of Salisbury, and at a later time Sir John Oldcastle, placed themselves openly at the head of the cause and threw open their gates as a refuge for its missionaries. London in its hatred of the clergy was fiercely Lollard, and defended a Lollard preacher who had ventured to advocate the new doctrines from the pulpit of St. Paul's. Its mayor, John of Northampton, showed the influence of the new morality in the Puritan spirit with which he dealt with the morals of the city. Compelled to act, as he said, by the remissness of the clergy, who connived for money at every kind of debauchery, he arrested the loose women, cut off their hair, and carted them through the streets as an object of public scorn. But the moral spirit of the new movement, though infinitely its grander side, was less dangerous to the Church than its open repudiation of the older doctrines and systems of Christendom. Out of the floating mass of opinion which bore the name of Lollardry one great faith gradually evolved itself, a faith in the sole authority of the Bible as a source of religious truth. The translation of Wyclif did its work. Scripture, complains a canon of Leicester, "became a vulgar thing, and more open to lay folk and women that knew how to read than it is wont to be to clerks themselves." Consequences which Wyclif had perhaps shrunk from drawing were boldly drawn by his disciples. The Church was declared to have become apostate, its priesthood was denounced as no priesthood, its sacraments as idolatry. It was in vain that the clergy attempted to stifle the new movement by their old weapon of persecution. The jealousy entertained by the baronage and gentry of every pretension of the Church to secular power foiled its efforts to make persecution effective. At the moment of the Peasant Revolt, Courtenay procured the enactment of a statute which commissioned the sheriffs to seize all persons convicted before the bishops of preaching heresy. But the statute was repealed in the next session, and the Commons

Digitized by Google

added to the bitterness of the blow by their protest that they considered it "in nowise their interest to be more under the jurisdiction of the prelates or more bound by them than their ancestors had been in times past." Heresy indeed was still a felony by the common law, and there were earlier instances in our history of the punishment of heretics by the fire. But the limitation of each bishop's jurisdiction within the limits of his own diocese made it almost impossible to arrest the wandering preachers of the new doctrine, and the civil punishment—even if it had been sanctioned by public opinion—seems to have long fallen into desuetude. Experience proved to the prelates that no sheriff would arrest on the mere warrant of an ecclesiastical officer, and that no royal court would issue the old writ "for the burning of a heretic" on a bishop's requisition. But powerless as the efforts of the Church were for purposes of repression, they were effective in rousing the temper of the Lollards into a bitter and fanatical hatred of their persecutors. The Lollard teachers directed their fiercest invectives against the wealth and secularity of the great Churchmen. In a 1395.
formal petition to Parliament they mingled denunciations of the riches of the clergy with an open profession of disbelief in transubstantiation, priesthood, pilgrimages, and image worship, and a demand, which illustrates the strange medley of opinions which jostled together in the new movement, that war might be declared unchristian, and that trades such as those of the goldsmith or the armourer, which were contrary to apostolical poverty, might be banished from the realm. They contended (and it is remarkable that a Parliament of the next reign adopted the statement) that from the superfluous revenues of the Church, if once they were applied to purposes of general utility, the King might maintain fifteen earls, fifteen hundred knights, and six thousand squires, besides endowing a hundred hospitals for the relief of the poor.

**The French Wars.**

The distress of the landowners, the general disorganization of the country, in every part of which bands of marauders were openly defying the law, the panic of the Church and of society at large as the projects of the Lollards shaped themselves into more daring and revolutionary forms, added a fresh keenness to the national discontent at the languid and inefficient prosecution of the war. France was, in fact, mistress of the seas; Guienne lay at her mercy, and the northern frontier of England itself was flung open to her by the alliance of the Scots. The landing of a French force in the Forth roused the whole country to a desperate effort, and a large and well-equipped army of Englishmen penetrated as far as Edinburgh in the vain hope of bringing their enemy to battle. A more terrible blow followed in the sub- 1385.
mission of Ghent to the French forces, the reception of a French prince by Flanders as its Count, and the loss of the one remaining market for English commerce; while the forces which should have been employed

Digitized by Google

SEC. V.
RICHARD THE SECOND.
1381-1399.

in saving it, and in the protection of the English shores against the threat of invasion, were squandered by John of Gaunt on the Spanish frontier in pursuit of a visionary crown, which he claimed in his wife's right, the daughter of Pedro the Cruel. But even calamities such as these galled the national pride less than the peace tendency of the court. Michael de la Pole, the Earl of Suffolk, had stood since the suppression of the revolt at the head of the royal councils, and the whole aim of his policy had been to bring about a reconciliation with France. Unsuccessful as they were in effecting this object, his efforts roused the resentment of the nobles, and at the instigation of the Duke of Gloucester, who, in the absence of his brother, John of Gaunt, had placed himself at its head, the Parliament demanded the dismissal of the minister and the transfer of the royal power to a permanent Council chosen by the lords. The resistance of the young King was crushed by the appearance of the baronage in arms, and a bill of impeachment hurried into exile and to death both the Earl and the judges of his party who had pronounced the rule of the Council to be

1388. in itself illegal. It may have been the violence of these measures which restored popular sympathy to the royal cause, for hardly a year had passed when Richard found himself strong enough to break down by a word the government against which he had struggled so vainly. In the great Easter Council he suddenly asked his uncle to tell him how old he was. "Your Highness," replied Gloucester, "is in your twenty-second year." "Then I am old enough to manage my own affairs," said Richard, coolly. "I have been longer under guardianship than any ward in my realm. I thank you for your past services, my lords, but I need them no longer."

**Richard II.**
1388-1397.

For nine years the young King wielded the power which thus passed quietly into his hands with singular wisdom and good fortune. On the one hand he carried his peace policy into effect by a succession of negotiations which brought about the conclusion of a truce for four years, and this period of rest was lengthened to twenty-eight by a subsequent agreement on his marriage with Isabella, the daughter of Charles the Fifth of France. On the other he announced his resolve to rule by the advice of his Parliament, submitted to its censure, and consulted it on all matters of importance. In a vigorous campaign he pacified Ireland while redressing the abuses of its government; and the Lollard troubles which had broken out during his absence were at once repressed on his return. But the brilliant abilities which Richard shared with the rest of the Plantagenets were marred by a fitful inconstancy and a mean spirit of revenge. His uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, remained at the head of the war-party; his turbulent opposition to the peace policy of the King, and his resistance to the French marriage which embodied it,

Digitized by Google

may have made a conflict inevitable; but the readiness with which Richard seized on the opportunity of provoking such a contest shows the bitterness with which during the long years which had passed since the death of Suffolk he had brooded over his projects of vengeance. The Parliament which had been employed by Gloucester to humble the Crown was now used to crush its opponents. The pardons granted nine years before were recalled; the commission of Regency declared to have been illegal, and it was ruled that the enactment of such a measure rendered its promoters guilty of treason. The blow was ruthlessly followed up. When the summons to answer to his impeachment reached the Duke, he was found dead in his prison at Calais: while his chief supporter, Arundel, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was condemned to exile, and the nobles of his party to imprisonment. The measures introduced 1398.
into the Parliament of the following year showed that from a mere project of revenge Richard's designs had widened into a definite plan of absolute government. He was freed from Parliamentary control by the grant to him of a tax upon wool for the term of his life. His next step got rid of Parliament itself. A committee of twelve peers and six commoners was appointed in Parliament, with power to continue their sittings after its dissolution and to "examine and determine all matters and subjects which had been moved in the presence of the king with all the dependencies thereof." The aim of Richard was to supersede by means of this permanent commission the body from which it originated: he at once employed it to determine causes and enact laws, and forced from every tenant of the Crown an oath to recognize the validity of its acts and to oppose any attempts to alter or revoke them. With such an engine at his command the King was absolute, and with the appearance of absolutism the temper of his reign suddenly changed. A system of forced loans, the sale of charters of pardon to Gloucester's adherents, the outlawry of seventeen counties at once on the plea that they had supported his enemies, a reckless interference with the course of justice and the independence of the judges, roused into new life the social and political discontent which was threatening the very existence of the Crown.

**The Lancastrian. Revolution.**

By his good government and by his evil government alike Richard had succeeded in alienating every class of his subjects. He had estranged the nobles by his peace policy, the landowners by his refusal to sanction the insane measures of repression they directed against the labourer, the merchant class by his illegal exactions, and the Church by his shelter of the Lollards. Not only had the persecution of the new sect been foiled by the inactivity of the royal officers and the repeal of the bills of heresy introduced by the Primate, but Lollardism found favour in the very precincts of the court. It was through the patronage of Richard's first queen, Anne

Digitized by Google

SEC. V.
RICHARD THE SECOND.
1381-1399.

of Bohemia, that the tracts and Bible of the Reformer had been introduced into her native land to give rise to the remarkable movement which found its earliest leaders in John Huss and Jerome of Prague. The head of the sect, the Earl of Salisbury, was of all the English nobles the most favoured by and the most faithful to the King. Richard stood almost alone in fact in his realm, but even this accumulated mass of hatred might have failed to crush him had not an act of jealousy and tyranny placed an able and unscrupulous leader at the head of the national discontent. Henry, Earl of Derby and Duke of Hereford, the eldest son of John of Gaunt, though he had taken part against his royal cousin in the earlier troubles of his reign, had loyally supported him in his recent measures against Gloucester. No sooner, however, were these measures successful than Richard turned his new power against the more dangerous House of Lancaster, and availing himself of a quarrel between the Dukes of Hereford and Norfolk, in which each party bandied accusations of treason against the other, banished both from the realm. Banishment was soon followed by outlawry, and on his father's death Henry found himself deprived both of the title and estates of his house. At the moment when he had thus driven his cousin to despair, Richard crossed into Ireland to complete the work of conquest and organization which he had begun there; and Archbishop Arundel, an exile like himself, urged the Earl to take advantage of the King's absence for the recovery of his rights. Eluding the vigilance of the French Court, at which he had taken shelter, Henry landed with a handful of men on the coast of Yorkshire, where he was at once joined by the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, the heads of the great houses of the Percies and the Nevilles; and, with an army which grew as he advanced, entered triumphantly into London. The Duke of York, whom the King had left regent, united his forces to those of Henry, and when Richard landed at Milford Haven he found the kingdom lost. His own army dispersed as it landed, and the deserted King fled in disguise to North Wales to find a second force which the Earl of Salisbury had gathered for his support already disbanded. Invited to a conference with the Duke of Lancaster at Flint, he saw himself surrounded by the rebel forces. "I am betrayed," he cried, as the view of his enemies burst on him from the hill; "there are pennons and banners in the valley." But it was too late for retreat. Richard was seized and brought before his cousin. "I am come before my time," said Lancaster, "but I will show you the reason. Your people, my lord, complain that for the space of twenty years you have ruled them harshly: however, if it please God, I will help you to
1399. rule them better." "Fair cousin," replied the King, "since it pleases you, it pleases me well." But Henry's designs went far beyond a share in the government of the realm. The Parliament which assembled in

Digitized by Google

Westminster Hall received with shouts of applause a formal paper in which Richard resigned the Crown as one incapable of reigning and worthy for his great demerits to be deposed. The resignation was, in fact, confirmed by a solemn Act of Deposition. The coronation oath was read, and a long impeachment, which stated the breach of the promises made in it, was followed by a solemn vote of both Houses which removed Richard from the state and authority of King. According to the strict rules of hereditary descent as construed by the feudal lawyers, by an assumed analogy with the descent of ordinary estates, the crown would now have passed to a house which had at an earlier period played a leading part in the revolutions of the Edwards. The great-grandson of the Mortimer who brought about the deposition of Edward the Second had married the daughter and heiress of Lionel of Clarence, the third son of Edward the Third. The childlessness of Richard and the death of Edward's second son without issue placed Edmund, his grandson by this marriage, first among the claimants of the crown; but he was a child of six years old, the strict rule of hereditary descent had never received any formal recognition in the case of the Crown, and precedent had established the right of Parliament to choose in such a case a successor among any other members of the Royal House. With the characteristic subtlety of his temper, however, Henry professed to disguise this choice of the nation by the assertion of a second right arising from a supposed conquest of the realm. He rose from his seat and solemnly challenged the crown; "as that I am descended by regal line of blood coming from the good lord King Henry the Third, and through that right that God of His Grace hath sent me with help of my kin and of my friends to recover it: the which realm was in point to be undone for default of governance and undoing of good laws." Whatever defects such a claim might present were more than covered by the solemn recognition of Parliament. The two Archbishops, taking the new sovereign by the hand, seated him upon the throne, and Henry in emphatic words ratified the compact between himself and his people. "Sirs," he said to the prelates, lords, knights, and burgesses gathered round him, "I thank God and you, spiritual and temporal, and all estates of the land: and do you to wit it is not my will that any man think that by way of conquest I would disinherit any of his heritage, franchises, or other rights that he ought to have, nor put him out of the good that he has and has had by the good laws and customs of the realm, except those persons that have been against the good purpose and the common profit of the realm."



Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE HOUSE OF LANCASTER. 1399-1422.

## Section VI.—The House of Lancaster, 1399—1422.

[*Authorities.*—For Henry the Fourth the "Annales Henrici Quarti" and Walsingham, as before. For his successor, the "Gesta Henrici Quinti" by Titus Livius, a chaplain in the Royal army (published by English Historical Society); the life by Elmham, Prior of Lenton, simpler in style but identical in arrangement and facts with the former work; the biography by Robert Redman, and the metrical Chronicle by Elmham, published by the Master of the Rolls under the title of "Memorials of Henry the Fifth"; with the meagre Chronicles of Hardyng and Otterbourne. Monstrelet is the most important French authority for this period; the Norman campaigns may be studied in M. Puiseux' "Siége de Rouen," Caen, 1867. Lord Brougham has given a vigorous and, in a constitutional point of view, valuable sketch of this period in his "History of England under the House of Lancaster."]

---

**The Suppression of Lollardry.**

Raised to the throne by a Parliamentary revolution and resting its claims on a Parliamentary title, the House of Lancaster was precluded by its very position from any resumption of the last struggle for independence on the part of the Crown which had culminated in the bold effort of Richard the Second. During no period of our early history were the powers of the two Houses so frankly recognized. The tone of Henry the Fourth till the very close of his reign is that of humble compliance with the prayers of the Parliament, and even his imperious successor shrank almost with timidity from any conflict with it. But the Crown had been bought by other pledges less noble than that of constitutional rule. The support of the nobles had been secured by a tacit engagement on Henry's part to reverse the peace policy of his predecessor and to renew the fatal war with France. The support of the Church had been purchased by the more terrible promise of persecution. The last pledge was speedily redeemed. In the first Convocation of his reign Henry announced himself as the protector of the Church, and ordered the prelates to take measures for the suppression of heresy and of the wandering preachers. The hindrances which had neutralized the efforts of the bishops were taken away by an Act which gave them
1401. power to arrest on common rumour, to put the accused to purgation, and to punish with imprisonment. These, however, were but preludes to the more formidable provisions of the Statute of Heretics. By the provisions of this infamous Act, bishops were now not only permitted to arrest and imprison, so long as their heresy should last, all preachers of heresy, all schoolmasters infected with heretical teaching, all owners or writers of heretical books, but a refusal to abjure, or a relapse after abjuration, enabled them to hand over the heretic to the civil officers, and by these—so ran the first legal enactment of religious bloodshed which defiled our statute book—he was to be burnt on a high place before the people. The statute was hardly passed before William Sawtre, who had quitted a

Digitized by Google

Norfolk rectory to spread the new Lollardism, became its first victim. A layman, John Badbie, was committed to the flames in the presence of the Prince of Wales for a denial of transubstantiation. The groans of the sufferer were taken for a recantation, and the Prince ordered the fire to be plucked away; but the offer of life and of a pension failed to break the spirit of the Lollard, and he was again hurled back to his doom. It was probably the fierce resentment of the Reformers which gave life to the incessant revolts which threatened the throne of Henry the Fourth. The mere maintenance of his power through the troubled years of his reign is the best proof of the King's ability. A conspiracy of Richard's half-brothers, the Earls of Huntingdon and Kent, was hardly suppressed when the discontent of the Percies at the ingratitude of a monarch whom they claimed to have raised to the crown broke out in rebellion, and Hotspur, the son of the Earl of Northumberland, leagued himself with the Scots and with the insurgents of Wales. His defeat and death in an obstinate battle 1402.
near Shrewsbury for a time averted the danger; but three years later his father rose in a fresh insurrection, and though the seizure and execution of his fellow-conspirator Scrope, the Archbishop of York, drove Northumberland over the border, he remained till his death in a later inroad a peril to the throne. Encouraged meanwhile by the weakness of England, Wales, so long tranquil, shook off the yoke of her conquerors, and the whole country rose at the call of an adventurer, Owen Glendower, or of Glendowerdy, who proclaimed himself the descendant of its native princes. Owen left the invaders, as of old, to contend with famine and the mountain storms; but they had no sooner retired than he sallied out from his inaccessible fastnesses to win victories which were followed by the adhesion of all North Wales and great part of the South to his cause, while a force of French auxiliaries was despatched by Charles of France to his aid. It was only the restoration of peace in England which enabled Henry to roll back the tide of Glendower's success. By slow and deliberate campaigns continued through four years the Prince of Wales wrested from him the South; his subjects in the North, discouraged by successive defeats, gradually fell away from his standard; and the repulse of a bold descent upon Shropshire drove Owen at last to take refuge among the mountains of Snowdon, where he seems to have maintained the contest, single-handed, till his death. With the close of the Welsh rising the Lancastrian throne felt itself secure from without, but the danger from the Lollards remained as great as ever within. The new statute and its terrible penalties were boldly defied. The death of the Earl of Salisbury in one of the revolts against Henry, though his gory head was welcomed into London by a procession of abbots and bishops who went out singing psalms of thanksgiving to meet it, only transferred the leadership of the party to one of the foremost warriors of



Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE HOUSE OF LANCASTER. 1399-1422.

the time. Sir John Oldcastle, whose marriage raised him to the title of Lord Cobham, threw open his castle of Cawley to the Lollards as their head-quarters, sheltered their preachers, and set the prohibitions and sentences of the bishops at defiance. Although Henry the Fourth died worn out with the troubles of his reign without venturing to cope with this formidable opponent, the stern temper of his successor at once faced the danger. A new royal mandate was issued against the preachers, and Oldcastle was besieged in his castle and conducted as a prisoner to the Tower. His escape was the signal for the revolt of his sect. A secret command summoned the Lollards to assemble in St. George's fields. We gather, if not the real aims of the rising, at least the terror that it caused, from Henry's statement that its purpose was "to destroy himself, his brothers, and several of the spiritual and temporal lords;" but the vigilance of the young King prevented the junction of the Lollards of London with their friends in the country by securing the city gates, and those who appeared at the place of meeting were dispersed by the royal forces. On the failure of the rising, the law was rendered more rigorous. Magistrates were directed to arrest all Lollards and hand them over to the bishops; a conviction of heresy was made to entail forfeiture of blood and of estate; and the execution of thirty-nine prominent Lollards was followed after some years by the arrest of Oldcastle himself. In spite of his rank and of an old friendship with the King, Lord Cobham was hung alive in chains and a fire slowly kindled beneath his feet.

1413.

1418.

Agincourt.

With the death of Sir John Oldcastle the political activity of Lollardism came suddenly to an end, while the steady persecution of the bishops, if it failed to extinguish it as a religious movement, succeeded in destroying the vigour and energy which it had shown at the outset of its career. But the House of Lancaster had, as yet, only partially accomplished the aims with which it mounted the throne. In the eyes of the nobles, Richard's chief crime had been his policy of peace, and the aid which they gave to the revolution sprang mainly from their hope of a renewal of the war. The energy of the war-party was seconded by the temper of the nation at large, already forgetful of the sufferings of the past struggle and longing only to wipe out its shame. The internal calamities of France offered at this moment a tempting opportunity for aggression. Its King, Charles the Sixth, was a maniac, while its princes and nobles were divided into two great parties, the one headed by the Duke of Burgundy and bearing his name, the other by the Duke of Orleans and bearing the title of Armagnacs. The struggle had been jealously watched by Henry the Fourth, but his attempt to feed it by pushing an English force into France at once united the combatants. Their strife, however, recommenced more bitterly than ever when the claim of the French crown by Henry the Fifth on his accession declared his

Digitized by Google

purpose of renewing the war. No claim could have been more utterly baseless, for the Parliamentary title by which the House of Lancaster held England could give it no right over France, and the strict law of hereditary succession which Edward asserted could be pleaded, if pleaded at all, only by the House of Mortimer. Not only the claim, indeed, but the very nature of the war itself was wholly different from that of Edward the Third. Edward had been forced into the struggle against his will by the ceaseless attacks of France, and his claim of the crown was a mere afterthought to secure the alliance of Flanders. The war of Henry, on the other hand, though in form a mere renewal of the earlier struggle on the expiration of the truce made by Richard, was in fact a wanton aggression on the part of a nation tempted by the helplessness of its opponent and still galled by the memory of former defeat. It was in vain that the French strove to avert the English attack by an offer to surrender the Duchy of Acquitaine; Henry's aims pointed to the acquisition of Normandy rather than of the South, and his first exploit was the capture of Harfleur. Dysentery made havoc in his ranks during the siege, and it was with a mere handful of men that he resolved to insult the enemy by a daring march, like that of Edward, upon Calais. The discord, however, on which he probably reckoned for security, vanished before the actual appearance of the invaders in the heart of France, and when his weary and half-starved force succeeded in crossing the Somme, it found sixty thousand Frenchmen encamped right aross its line of march. Their position, flanked on either side by woods, but with a front so narrow that the dense masses were drawn up thirty men deep, was strong for purposes of defence but ill suited for attack; and the French leaders, warned by the experience of Cressy and Poitiers, resolved to await the English advance. Henry, on the other hand, had no choice between attack and unconditional surrender. His troops were starving, and the way to Calais lay across the French army. But the King's courage rose with the peril. A knight—it was said—in his train wished that the thousands of stout warriors lying idle that night in England had been standing in his ranks. Henry answered with a burst of scorn. "I would not have a single man more," he replied. "If God give us the victory, it will be plain that we owe it to His grace. If not, the fewer we are, the less loss for England." Starving and sick as were the handful of men whom he led, they shared the spirit of their leader. As the chill rainy night passed away, his archers bared their arms and breasts to give fair play to "the crooked stick and the grey goose wing," but for which—as the rhyme ran—"England were but a fling," and with a great shout sprang forward to the attack. The sight of their advance roused the fiery pride of the French; the wise resolve of their leaders was forgotten, and the dense mass of men-at-arms plunged heavily forward through

*October 25, 1415.*

Digitized by Google

miry ground on the English front. But at the first sign of movement Henry had halted his line, and fixing in the ground the sharp palisades with which each man was furnished, his archers poured their fatal arrow flights into the hostile ranks. The carnage was terrible, but the desperate charges of the French knighthood at last drove the English archers to the neighbouring woods, from which they were still able to pour their shot into the enemy's flanks, while Henry, with the men-at-arms around him, flung himself on the French line. In the terrible struggle which followed the King bore off the palm of bravery: he was felled once by a blow from a French mace, and the crown on his helmet was cleft by the sword of the Duke of Alençon; but the enemy was at last broken, and the defeat of the main body of the French was followed at once by the rout of their reserve. The triumph was more complete, as the odds were even greater, than at Cressy. Eleven thousand Frenchmen lay dead on the field, and more than a hundred princes and great lords were among the fallen.

**The Conquest of Normandy.**

The immediate result of the battle of Agincourt was small, for the English army was too exhausted for pursuit, and it made its way to Calais only to return to England. The war was limited to a contest for the command of the Channel, till the increasing bitterness of the strife between the Burgundians and Armagnacs encouraged Henry to resume his attempt to recover Normandy. Whatever may have been his aim in this enterprise—whether it were, as has been suggested, to provide a refuge for his House, should its power be broken in England, or simply to acquire a command of the seas—the patience and skill with which his object was accomplished raise him high in the rank of military leaders. Disembarking with an army of 40,000 men, near the mouth of the Touque, he stormed Caen, received the surrender of Bayeux, reduced Alençon and Falaise, and detaching his brother the Duke of Gloucester to occupy the Côtentin, made himself master of Avranches and Domfront. With Lower Normandy wholly in his hands, he advanced upon Evreux, captured Louviers, and, seizing Pont de l'Arche, threw his troops across the Seine. The end of these masterly movements was now revealed. Rouen was at this time the largest and wealthiest of the towns of France; its walls were defended by a powerful artillery; Alan Blanchard, a brave and resolute patriot, infused the fire of his own temper into the vast population; and the garrison, already strong, was backed by fifteen thousand citizens in arms. But the genius of Henry was more than equal to the difficulties with which he had to deal. He had secured himself from an attack on his rear by the reduction of Lower Normandy, his earlier occupation of Harfleur severed the town from the sea, and his conquest of Pont de l'Arche cut it off from relief on the side of Paris. Slowly but steadily the King drew his lines of investment round the doomed city; a flotilla was brought up from

Digitized by Google

Harfleur, a bridge of boats thrown over the Seine above the town, the deep trenches of the besiegers protected by posts, and the desperate sallies of the garrison stubbornly beaten back. For six months Rouen held resolutely out, but famine told fast on the vast throng of country folk who had taken refuge within its walls. Twelve thousand of these were at last thrust out of the city gates, but the cold policy of the conqueror refused them passage, and they perished between the trenches and the walls. In the hour of their agony women gave birth to infants, but even the new-born babes which were drawn up in baskets to receive baptism were lowered again to die on their mother's breast. It was little better within the town itself. As winter drew on one-half of the population wasted away. "War," said the terrible King, "has three handmaidens ever waiting on her, Fire, Blood, and Famine, and I have chosen the meekest maid of the three." But his demand of unconditional surrender nerved the citizens to a resolve of despair; they determined to fire the city and fling themselves in a mass on the English lines; and Henry, fearful lest his prize should escape him at the last, was driven to offer terms. Those who rejected a foreign yoke were suffered to leave the city, but his vengeance reserved its victim in Alan Blanchard, and the brave patriot was at Henry's orders put to death in cold blood. 1418.

**The Conquest of France.**

A few sieges completed the reduction of Normandy. The King's designs were still limited to the acquisition of that province; and pausing in his career of conquest, he strove to win its loyalty by a remission of taxation and a redress of grievances, and to seal its possession by a formal peace with the French Crown. The conferences, however, which were held for this purpose at Pontoise failed though the temporary reconciliation of the French factions, while the length and expense of the war began to rouse remonstrance and discontent at home. The King's difficulties were at their height when the assassination of the Duke of Burgundy at Montereau, in the very presence of the Dauphin with whom he had come to hold conference, rekindled the fires of civil strife. The whole Burgundian party, with the new Duke, Philip the Good, at its head, flung itself in a wild thirst for revenge into Henry's hands. The mad King, Charles the Sixth, with his Queen and daughters, were in Philip's hands, and in his resolve to exclude the Dauphin from the throne the Duke stooped to buy English aid by giving Catherine, the eldest of the French princesses, in marriage to Henry, by conferring on him the Regency during the life of Charles, and recognizing his succession to the crown at that sovereign's death. The treaty was solemnly ratified by Charles himself in a conference at Troyes, and Henry, who in his new capacity of Regent had undertaken to conquer in the name of his father-in-law the territory held by the Dauphin, reduced the towns of the Upper Seine and entered Paris in triumph side by side with 1420.

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE HOUSE OF LANCASTER. 1369-1422.

the King. The States-General of the realm were solemnly convened to the capital; and strange as the provisions of the Treaty of Troyes must have seemed, they were confirmed without a murmur, and Henry recognized as the future sovereign of France. A passing defeat of his brother Clarence in Anjou roused him from these solemnities. His re-appearance in the field was marked by the capture of Dreux, and a repulse before Orleans was redeemed by his success in the long and obstinate siege of Meaux. At no time had the fortunes of Henry reached a higher pitch than at the moment when he felt the touch of death. But the rapidity of his disease baffled the skill of physicians, and with a strangely characteristic regret that he had not lived to achieve the conquest of Jerusalem, the great Conqueror passed away.

*Aug.* 1422.

Digitized by Google

# CHAPTER VI.

## THE NEW MONARCHY.

### 1422—1540.

### Section I.—Joan of Arc. 1422-1451.

[*Authorities.*—The "Wars of the English in France," and Blondel's work "De Reductione Normanniæ," both published by the Master of the Rolls, give ample information on the military side of this period. Monstrelet remains our chief source of knowledge on the French side. The "Procès de Jeanne d'Arc," published by the Société de l'histoire de France, is the only real authority for her history. For English affairs we are reduced to the meagre accounts of William of Worcester, of the Continuator of the Croyland Chronicle, and of Fabyan. Fabyan, a London alderman with a strong bias in favour of the House of Lancaster, is useful for London only. The Continuator is one of the best of his class, and though connected with the House of York, the date of his work, which appeared soon after Bosworth Field, makes him fairly impartial, but he is sketchy and deficient in actual facts. The more copious narrative of Polydore Vergil is far superior to these in literary ability, but of later date and strongly Lancastrian in tone. The Rolls of Parliament and Rymer are of high value during this period. Among modern writers M. Michelet, in his "History of France" (vol. v.), has given a portrait of the Maid of Orleans at once exact and full of a tender poetry. Lord Brougham ("England under the House of Lancaster") is still useful on constitutional points.

---

**Disenfranchisement of the Commons.**

THE glory of Agincourt and the genius of Henry the Fifth hardly veiled at the close of his reign the weakness and humiliation of the Crown, hampered as it was by foreign war, by a huge debt amounting to nearly four millions of our money and which increased each year as the expenses doubled the income, by the weakness of its own title and by the claims of the House of Mortimer. The long minority of Henry the Sixth, who was a boy of nine years old at his father's death, as well as the personal weakness which marked his after-rule, left the House of Lancaster at the mercy of the Parliament. But the Parliament was fast dying down into a mere representation of the baronage and the great landowners. The Commons indeed retained the right of granting and controlling subsidies, of joining in all statutory enactments, and of impeaching ministers. But the Lower House was ceasing to be a real representative of the "Commons" whose name it bore. The borough franchise was suffering from the general tendency to restriction and privilege which in the bulk of towns was soon to reduce it to a farce. Up to this time all

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
JOAN OF ARC.
1423-1451.

freemen settling in a borough and paying their dues to it became by the mere settlement its burgesses; but during the reign of Henry the Sixth this largeness of borough life was roughly curtailed. The trade companies which vindicated civic freedom from the tyranny of the older merchant guilds themselves tended to become a narrow and exclusive oligarchy. Most of the boroughs had by this time acquired civic property, and it was with the aim of securing their own enjoyment of this against any share of it by "strangers" that the existing burgesses, for the most part, procured charters of incorporation from the Crown, which turned them into a close body and excluded from their number all who were not burgesses by birth or who failed henceforth to purchase their right of entrance by a long apprenticeship. In addition to this narrowing of the burgess-body, the internal government of the boroughs had almost universally passed, since the failure of the Communal movement in the thirteenth century, from the free gathering of the citizens in borough-mote into the hands of Common Councils, either self-elected or elected by the wealthier burgesses; and it was to these councils, or to a yet more restricted number of "select men" belonging to them, that clauses in the new charters generally confined the right of choosing their representatives in Parliament. The restriction of the county franchise on the other hand was the direct work of the aristocracy. Economic changes were in fact fast widening the franchise in the counties when the great landowners jealously interfered to curtail it. The number of freeholders had increased with the subdivision of estates and the social changes which we have already examined, while the increase of independence was marked by the "riots and divisions between the gentlemen and other people," which the nobles attributed to the excessive number of the voters. Matters were in this state when by an early Act of the reign of Henry the Sixth the right of voting in shires was restricted to freeholders holding land worth forty shillings (a sum equal in our money to at least twenty pounds) a year, and representing a far higher proportional income at the present time. This "great disfranchising statute," as it has been justly termed, was aimed, in its own words, against voters "of no value, whereof every of them pretended to have a voice equivalent with the more worthy knights and esquires dwelling within the same counties." But in actual working the statute was interpreted in a far more destructive fashion than its words were intended to convey. Up to this time all suitors who found themselves at the Sheriff's Court had voted without question for the Knight of the Shire, but by the new statute the great bulk of the existing voters, that is to say the leaseholders and copyholders, found themselves implicitly deprived of their franchise. A later statute, which seems, however, to have had no practical effect, showed the aristocratic temper, as well as the social changes against which it

1430.

Digitized by Google

struggled, in its requirement that every Knight of the Shire should be "a gentleman born." The restriction of the suffrage was soon followed by its corruption in the "management" of elections. The complaint of the Kentish-men in Cade's revolt alleges that "the people of the shire are not allowed to have their free election in the choosing of knights for the shire, but letters have been sent from divers estates to the great rulers of all the county, the which enforceth their tenants and other people by force to choose other persons than the common will is."

**England under the Nobles**

The death of Henry the Fifth revealed in its bare reality the secret of power. The whole of the royal authority vested without a struggle in a council composed of great lords and Churchmen representing the baronage, at whose head stood Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Chichester, a legitimated son of John of Gaunt by his mistress Catherine Swynford. In the presence of Lollardism, the Church had at this time ceased to be a great political power and sunk into a mere section of the landed aristocracy. Its one aim was to preserve its enormous wealth, which was threatened at once by the hatred of the heretics and by the greed of the nobles. Lollardism still lived, in spite of the steady persecution, as a spirit of revolt; and nine years after the young King's accession we find the Duke of Gloucester traversing England with men-at-arms for the purpose of repressing its risings and hindering the circulation of its invectives against the clergy. The greed of the nobles had been diverted, whether, as later legend said, by the deliberate device of the great Churchmen or no, to the fair field of France. For the real source of the passion with which the baronage pressed for war was sheer lust of gold. Whatever pulse of patriotism may have stirred the blood of the English archer at Agincourt, the aim of the English noble was simply plunder, the pillage of farms, the sack of cities, the ransom of captives. So intense was the greed of gain that only a threat of death could keep the fighting men in their ranks, and the results of victory after victory were lost by the anxiety of the conquerors to deposit their plunder and captives safely at home before reaping the more military fruits of their success. The moment the firm hand of great leaders such as Henry or Bedford was removed, the war died down into mere massacre and brigandage. "If God had been a captain now-a-days," exclaimed a French general, "He would have turned marauder." Cruelty went hand-in-hand with greed, and we find an English privateer coolly proposing to drown the crews of a hundred merchant vessels which he has taken, unless the council to whom he writes should think it better to spare their lives. The nobles were as lawless and dissolute at home as they were greedy and cruel abroad. The Parliaments, which had now become mere sittings of their retainers and partizans, were like armed camps to which the great lords came with small armies at their

Digitized by Google

Sec. I.
Joan of Arc.
1422-1451.

backs. That of 1426 received its name of the "Club Parliament," from the fact that when arms were prohibited the retainers of the barons appeared with clubs on their shoulders. When clubs were forbidden, they hid stones and balls of lead in their clothes. The dissoluteness against which Lollardism had raised its great moral protest reigned now without a check. A gleam of intellectual light was breaking on the darkness of the time, but only to reveal its hideous combination of mental energy with moral worthlessness. The Duke of Gloucester, whose love of letters was shown in the noble library he collected, was the most selfish and profligate prince of his day. The Earl of Worcester, a patron of Caxton, and one of the earliest scholars of the Revival of Letters, earned his title of "butcher" by the cruelty which raised him to a pre-eminence of infamy among the bloodstained leaders of the Wars of the Roses. All spiritual life seemed to have been trodden out in the ruin of the Lollards. Never had English literature fallen so low. A few tedious moralists alone preserved the name of poetry. History died down into the barest and most worthless fragments and annals. Even the religious enthusiam of the people seemed to have spent itself, or to have been crushed out by the bishops' courts. The one belief of the time was in sorcery and magic. Eleanor Cobham, the wife of the Duke of Gloucester, was convicted of having practised magic against the King's life with the priests of her household, and condemned to do penance in the streets of London. The shrivelled arm of Richard the Third was attributed to witchcraft. The mist which wrapt the battle-field of Barnet was attributed to the incantations of Friar Bungay. The one pure figure which rises out of the greed, the lust, the selfishness, and unbelief of the time, the figure of Joan of Arc, was regarded by every Englishman as that of a sorceress.

**Joan of Arc.**

Jeannette d'Arc was the child of a labourer of Domremy, a little village in the neighbourhood of Vaucouleurs on the borders of Lorraine and Champagne, in other words of France and of the Empire. Just without the little cottage where she was born began the great woods of the Vosges, where the children of Domremy drank in poetry and legend from fairy ring and haunted well, hung their flower garlands on the sacred trees, and sang songs to the "good people" who might not drink of the fountain because of their sins. Jeanne loved the forest; its birds and beasts came lovingly to her at her childish call. But at home men saw nothing in her but "a good girl, simple and pleasant in her ways," spinning and sewing by her mother's side while the other girls went to the fields, tender to the poor and sick, fond of church, and listening to the church-bell with a dreamy passion of delight which never left her. The quiet life was soon broken by the storm of war as it at last came home to Domremy. The death of Charles the Sixth, which followed hard on that of Henry, greatly

Digitized by Google

weakened the moral force of the English cause; and the partizans of the Dauphin, who still held his ground south of the Loire, pushed their incursions over the river with fresh vigour as they received reinforcements of Lombards from the Milanese, and of four thousand Scots who landed at Rochelle under the Earl of Douglas. In genius for war, however, and in political capacity, the Duke of Bedford, who had taken the command in France on his brother's death, was hardly inferior to Henry himself. Drawing closer by a patient diplomacy his alliances with the Dukes of Burgundy and Brittany, he completed the conquest of Northern France, secured his communication with Normandy by the capture of Meulan, made himself master of the line of the Yonne by a victory near Auxerre, and pushed forward into the country near Macon. It was to arrest his progress that the Constable of Buchan advanced boldly from the Loire to the very borders of Normandy and attacked the English army at Verneuil. But a repulse 1424.
hardly less disastrous than that of Agincourt left a third of the French knighthood on the field; and the Regent was preparing to cross the Loire when he was hindered by the intrigues of his brother the Duke of Gloucester. The nomination of Gloucester to the Regency in England by the will of the late King had been set aside by the council, and sick of the powerless Protectorate with which they had invested him, the Duke sought a new opening for his restless ambition in a marriage with Jacqueline, the Countess in her own right of Holland and Hainault. The match at once roused the jealousy of the Duke of Burgundy, who regarded himself as the heir of her dominions, and the efforts of Bedford were paralysed by the withdrawal of his allies as they marched northward to combat his brother. For three years the council strove in vain to put an end to the ruinous struggle, during which Bedford was forced to remain simply on the defensive, till the failure of Gloucester again restored to him the aid of Burgundy, and he was once more able to push forward to the conquest of the South. The delay, however, brought little help to France, and the Dauphin saw Orleans invested by ten thousand of the allies without power to march to its relief. The war had long since reached the borders of Lorraine, and the family of Jeanne had more than once been forced to fly to the woods before bands of marauders, and find their home burnt and sacked on their return. The whole North of France, indeed, from the Lorraine to the German border was being fast reduced to a desert. The husbandmen fled for refuge to the towns, till these in fear of famine shut their gates against them. Then in their despair they threw themselves into the woods and became brigands in their turn. So terrible was the devastation, that the two contending armies at one time failed even to find one another in the desolate Beauce. The towns were in hardly better case, for misery and disease killed a hundred thousand people in Paris alone. As the

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
JOAN OF ARC.
1422-1451.

outcasts and wounded passed by Domremy the young peasant girl gave them her bed and nursed them in their sickness. Her whole nature summed itself up in one absorbing passion: she "had pity," to use the phrase for ever on her lip, "on the fair realm of France." As her passion grew she recalled old prophecies that a maid from the Lorraine border should save the land; she saw visions; St. Michael appeared to her in a flood of blinding light, and bade her go to the help of the King and restore to him his realm. "Messire," answered the girl, "I am but a poor maiden; I know not how to ride to the wars, or to lead men-at-arms." The archangel returned to give her courage, and to tell her of "the pity" that there was in heaven for the fair realm of France. The girl wept, and longed that the angels who appeared to her would carry her away, but her mission was clear. It was in vain that her father when he heard her purpose swore to drown her ere she should go to the field with men-at-arms. It was in vain that the priest, the wise people of the village, the captain of Vaucouleurs, doubted and refused to aid her. "I must go to the King," persisted the peasant girl, "even if I wear my limbs to the very knees." "I had far rather rest and spin by my mother's side," she pleaded with a touching pathos, "for this is no work of my choosing, but I must go and do it, for my Lord wills it." "And who," they asked, "is your Lord?" "He is God." Words such as these touched the rough captain at last: he took Jeanne by the hand and swore to lead her to the King. At the Court itself she found hesitation and doubt. The theologians proved from their books that they ought not to believe her. "There is more in God's book than in yours," Jeanne answered simply. At last the Dauphin received her in the midst of a throng of nobles and soldiers. "Gentle Dauphin," said the girl, "my name is Jehan the Maid. The Heavenly King sends me to tell you that you shall be anointed and crowned in the town of Rheims, and you shall be lieutenant of the Heavenly King who is the King of France."

**The Deliverance of Orleans.**

Orleans had already been driven by famine to offers of surrender when Jeanne appeared in the French Court. Charles had done nothing for its aid but shut himself up at Chinon and weep helplessly. The long series of English victories had in fact so demoralized the French soldiery that a mere detachment of archers under Sir John Fastolfe had repulsed an army, in what was called the "Battle of the Herrings," and conducted the convoy of provisions to which it owed its name in triumph into the camp before Orleans. Only two or three thousand Englishmen remained there in the trenches after a new withdrawal of their Burgundian allies, but though the town swarmed with men-at-arms not a single sally had been ventured upon during the six months' siege. The success however of the handful of English besiegers depended wholly on the spell of terror which they had cast over France, and the appearance of Jeanne at once broke the

Digitized by Google

spell. The girl was in her eighteenth year, tall, finely formed, with all the vigour and activity of her peasant rearing, able to stay from dawn to nightfall on horseback without meat or drink. As she mounted her charger, clad in white armour from head to foot, with the great white banner studded with fleur-de-lys waving over her head, she seemed "a thing wholly divine, whether to see or hear." The ten thousand men-at-arms who followed her from Chinon, rough plunderers whose only prayer was that of La Hire, "Sire Dieu, I pray you to do for La Hire what La Hire would do for you, were you captain-at-arms and he God," left off their oaths and foul living at her word and gathered round the altars on their march. Her shrewd peasant humour helped her to manage the wild soldiery, and her followers laughed over their camp-fires at the old warrior who had been so puzzled by her prohibition of oaths that she suffered him still to swear by his bâton. In the midst of her enthusiasm her good sense never left her. The people crowded round her as she rode along, praying her to work miracles, and bringing crosses and chaplets to be blest by her touch. "Touch them yourself," she said to an old Dame Margaret; "your touch will be just as good as mine." But her faith in her mission remained as firm as ever. "The Maid prays and requires you," she wrote to Bedford, "to work no more distraction in France, but to come in her company to rescue the Holy Sepulchre from the Turk." "I bring you," she told Dunois when he sallied out of Orleans to meet her, "the best aid ever sent to any one, the aid of the King of Heaven." The besiegers looked on overawed as she led her force unopposed through their lines into Orleans, and, riding round the walls, bade the people look fearlessly on the dreaded forts which surrounded them. Her enthusiasm drove the hesitating generals to engage the handful of besiegers, and the enormous disproportion of forces at once made itself felt. Fort after fort was taken, till only the Tournelle remained, and then the council of war resolved to adjourn the attack. "You have taken your counsel," replied Jeanne, "and I take mine." Placing herself at the head of the men-at-arms, she ordered the gates to be thrown open, and led them against the fort. Few as they were, the English fought desperately, and the Maid, who had fallen wounded while endeavouring to scale its walls, was borne into a vineyard, while Dunois sounded the retreat. "Wait a while!" the girl imperiously pleaded, "eat and drink! so soon as my standard touches the wall you shall enter the fort." It touched, and the assailants burst in. On the next day the siege was abandoned, and the force which had conducted it withdrew in good order to the North. In the midst of her triumph Jeanne still remained the pure, tender-hearted peasant girl of the Vosges. Her first visit as she entered Orleans was to the great church, and there, as she knelt at mass, she wept in such a passion of devotion that "all the people wept with her." Her tears burst forth

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
JOAN OF ARC.
1422-1451.

afresh at her first sight of bloodshed and of the corpses strewn over the battle-field. She grew frightened at her first wound, and only threw off the touch of womanly fear when she heard the signal for retreat. Yet more womanly was the purity with which she passed through the brutal warriors of a mediæval camp. It was her care for her honour that had led her to clothe herself in a soldier's dress. She wept hot tears when told of the foul taunts of the English, and called passionately on God to witness her chastity. "Yield thee, yield thee, Gledstane," she cried to the English warrior whose insults had been foulest, as he fell wounded at her feet, "you called me harlot! I have great pity on your soul." But all thought of herself was lost in the thought of her mission. It was in vain that the French generals strove to remain on the Loire. Jeanne was resolute to complete her task, and while the English remained panic-stricken around Paris the army followed her from Gien through Troyes, growing in number as it advanced, till it reached the gates of Rheims. With the coronation of the Dauphin the Maid felt her errand to be over. "O gentle King, the pleasure of God is done," she cried, as she flung herself at the feet of Charles the Seventh and asked leave to go home. "Would it were His pleasure," she pleaded with the Archbishop as he forced her to remain, "that I might go and keep sheep once more with my sisters and my brothers: they would be so glad to see me again!"

**Death of the Maid.**

The policy of the French Court detained her while the cities of the North of France opened their gates to the newly-consecrated King. Bedford, however, who had been left without money or men, had now received reinforcements, and Charles, after a repulse before the walls of Paris, fell back behind the Loire; while the towns on the Oise submitted again to the Duke of Burgundy. In this later struggle Jeanne fought with her usual bravery, but with the fatal consciousness that her mission was at an end, and during the defence

1430.

of Compiègne she fell into the hands of the Bastard of Vendome, to be sold by her captor into the hands of the Duke of Burgundy and by the Duke into the hands of the English. To the English her triumphs were victories of sorcery, and after a year's imprisonment she was brought to trial on a charge of heresy before an ecclesiastical court with the Bishop of Beauvais at its head. Throughout the long process which followed every art was employed to entangle her in her talk. But the simple shrewdness of the peasant girl foiled the efforts of her judges. "Do you believe," they asked, "that you are in a state of peace?" "If I am not," she replied, "God will put me in it. If I am, God will keep me in it." Her capture, they argued, showed that God had forsaken her. "Since it has pleased God that I should be taken," she answered meekly, "it is for the best." "Will you submit," they demanded at last, "to the judgment of the Church Militant?" "I have come to the King of France," Jeanne replied

Digitized by Google

"by commission from God and from the Church Triumphant above: to that Church I submit." "I had far rather die," she ended, passionately, "than renounce what I have done by my Lord's command." They deprived her of mass. "Our Lord can make me hear it without your aid," she said, weeping. "Do your voices," asked the judges, "forbid you to submit to the Church and the Pope?" "Ah, no! Our Lord first served." Sick, and deprived of all religious aid, it was no wonder that as the long trial dragged on and question followed question Jeanne's firmness wavered. On the charge of sorcery and diabolical possession she still appealed firmly to God. "I hold to my Judge," she said, as her earthly judges gave sentence against her, "to the King of Heaven and Earth. God has always been my Lord in all that I have done. The devil has never had power over me." It was only with a view to be delivered from the English prison and transferred to the prisons of the Church that she consented to a formal abjuration of heresy. She feared in fact among the English soldiery those outrages to her honour, to guard against which she had from the first assumed the dress of a man. In the eyes of the Church her dress was a crime and she abandoned it; but a renewed insult forced her to resume the one safeguard left her, and the return to it was treated as a relapse into heresy which doomed her to death. A great pile was raised in the market-place of Rouen where her statue stands now. Even the brutal soldiers who snatched the hated "witch" from the hands of the clergy and hurried her to her doom were hushed as she reached the stake. One indeed passed to her a rough cross he had made from a stick he held, and she clasped it to her bosom. "Oh! Rouen, Rouen," she was heard to murmur, as her eyes ranged over the city from the lofty scaffold, "I have great fear lest you suffer for my death." "Yes! my voices were of God!" she suddenly cried as the last moment came; "they have never deceived me!" Soon the flames reached her, the girl's head sunk on her breast, there was one cry of "Jesus!"—"We are lost," an English soldier muttered as the crowd broke up, "we have burned a Saint."

1431.

**The Loss of France.**

The English cause was indeed irretrievably lost. In spite of a pompous coronation of their boy-king at Paris, Bedford, with the cool wisdom of his temper, seems to have abandoned all hope of permanently retaining France, and to have fallen back on his brother's original plan of securing Normandy. Henry's Court was established for a year at Rouen, a university founded at Caen, and whatever rapine and disorder might be permitted elsewhere, justice, good government, and security for trade were resolutely maintained through the favoured province. At home Bedford was resolutely backed by the Bishop of Winchester, who had been raised to the rank of Cardinal, and who still governed England through the Royal council in spite of the fruitless struggles of the Duke of Gloucester. His immense wealth



Digitized by Google

was poured without stint into the exhausted Treasury; his loans to the Crown amounted to half-a-million; and the army which he had raised at his own cost for the Hussite Crusade in Bohemia was unscrupulously diverted to the relief of Bedford after the delivery of Orleans. The Cardinal's diplomatic ability was seen in the truces he wrung from Scotland, and in his personal efforts to prevent the reconciliation of
1435 Burgundy with France. But the death of Bedford was a death-blow to the English cause. Burgundy allied itself with Charles the Seventh; Paris, after a sudden revolt, surrendered to the King; and the English dominions were at once reduced to Normandy and the fortresses of Picardy, Maine, and Anjou. To preserve these the English soldiers, shrunk as they were to a mere handful, struggled with a bravery as desperate as in their days of triumph. Lord Talbot, the most daring of their chiefs, forded the Somme with the waters up to his chin to relieve Crotoy, and threw his men across the Oise in the face of a French army to relieve Pontoise. But in spite of these efforts and of the pressure of the war-party at home, the great Churchmen, who, though weakened by Beaufort's retirement, still remained at the head of affairs, saw that success was no longer possible. They offered in vain to fall back on the terms of the Treaty of Bretigny; and after the expiration of a short truce, which they purchased by the release of the Duke of Orleans, a fresh effort for peace was made by the Earl of Suffolk, who had now become the minister of Henry the
1445. Sixth and negotiated for his master a marriage with Marguerite of Anjou. Her father, Réné, the titular King of Sicily and Jerusalem, was also nominally Duke of the provinces of Maine and Anjou, and these were surrendered by the English minister as the price of a match which Suffolk regarded as the prelude to a final peace. A terrible crime secured the peace party from the opposition of the Duke of Gloucester, who had resumed his old activity on the retirement of Cardinal Beaufort and had now placed himself at the head of the partizans of the war; he was summoned to attend a Parliament at St. Edmondsbury, charged with high treason, and a few days after
1447. found dead in his bed. But the difficulties he had raised foiled Suffolk in his negotiations; and though Charles extorted the surrender of Le Mans by a threat of war, the provisions of the treaty remained for the most part unfulfilled. The struggle, however, now became a hopeless one. In two months from the resumption of the war half Normandy was in the hands of Dunois; Rouen rose against her feeble garrison and threw open her gates to the King; and the defeat of three thousand Englishmen who had landed at Fourmigny was the signal for revolt throughout the rest of the province. The surrender of Cherbourg left Henry not a foot of ground in Normandy, but the views of the French monarch reached south of
1451. the Loire, where Guienne was still loyal to the English Crown. But

Digitized by Google

not a man arrived for its defence; and the surrender of fortress after fortress secured the final expulsion of the English from the soil of France. The Hundred Years' War had ended, not only in the loss of the temporary conquests made since the time of Edward the Third, with the exception of Calais, but in the loss of the great southern province which had remained in English hands ever since the marriage of its Duchess, Eleanor, to Henry the Second, and in the building up of France into a far greater power than it had ever been before.

## Section II.—The Wars of the Roses. 1450—1471.

[*Authorities.*—No period, save the last, is scantier in historical authorities. We still possess William of Worcester, Fabyan, and the Croyland Continuator, and for the struggle between Warwick and Edward, the valuable narrative of "The Arrival of Edward the Fourth," edited by Mr. Bruce for the Camden Society, which may be taken as the official account on the royal side. "The Paston Letters" (now admirably edited by Mr. Gardner) are the first instance in England of a distinct family correspondence, and throw great light on the social history of the time. Cade's rising has been illustrated in two papers, lately reprinted, by Mr. Durrant Cooper. The Rolls of Parliament are, as before, of the highest value.]

**Cade's Revolt.**

The ruinous issue of the great struggle with France roused England to a burst of fury against the wretched government to whose weakness and credulity it attributed its disasters. Suffolk was impeached and murdered as he fled across sea. The Bishop of Chichester, who had negotiated the cession of Anjou, was seized by the populace and torn to pieces. In Kent, the great manufacturing district of the day, seething with a busy population, and especially concerned with the French contest through the piracy of the Cinque Ports where every house showed some spoil from the wars, the discontent broke into open revolt. Yeomen and tradesmen formed the bulk of the insurgents, but they were joined by more than a hundred esquires and gentlemen, and two great landowners of Suffolk, the Abbot of Battle and the Prior of Lewes, openly favoured their cause. John Cade, a soldier of some experience in the French wars, was placed at their head, and the army, now twenty thousand men strong, marched in Whitsun-week on Blackheath. The "Complaint of the Commons of Kent," which they laid before the Royal Council is of enormous value in the light which it throws on the condition of the people. So utterly had Lollardism been extinguished that not one of the demands touches on religious reform. The old social discontent seems to have subsided. The question of villainage and serfage, which had roused Kent to its desperate rising in 1381, finds no place in its "Complaint" of 1450. In the seventy years which had intervened, villainage had died

1450.



Digitized by Google

SEC. II.

THE WARS OF THE ROSES. 1450-1471.

naturally away before the progress of social change. The Statutes of Apparel, which begin at this time to encumber the Statute-Book, show in their anxiety to curtail the dress of the labourer and the farmer the progress of these classes in comfort and wealth; and from the language of the statutes themselves, it is plain that as wages rose both farmer and labourer went on clothing themselves better in spite of sumptuary provisions. With the exception of a demand for the repeal of the Statute of Labourers, the programme of the Commons was now not social, but political. The "Complaint" calls for administrative and economical reforms, for a change of ministry, a more careful expenditure of the royal revenue, and, as we have seen, for the restoration of freedom of election, which had been broken in upon by the interference both of the Crown and the great landowners. The refusal of the Council to receive the "Complaint" was followed by a victory of the Kentishmen over the Royal forces at Sevenoaks; and the occupation of London, coupled with the execution of Lord Say, the most unpopular of the Royal ministers, broke the obstinacy of his colleagues. The "Complaint" was received, and pardons granted to all who had joined in the rising; but the insurgents were hardly dispersed to their homes, when Cade, who had striven in vain to retain them in arms, was pursued and slain as he fled into Sussex. No bloody retaliation followed on the death of the chief of the revolt, but the "Complaint" was quietly laid aside, and the Duke of Somerset, who was especially regarded as responsible for the late misgovernment, resumed his place at the head of the Royal Council.

**York and the Beauforts.**

Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, as the descendant of John of Gaunt and his mistress Catherine Swynford, was the representative of a junior branch of the House of Lancaster, excluded indeed from the throne by a special clause in the Act which legitimatized their line, but whose hopes of the Crown were now roused by the childlessness of Henry the Sixth. It was probably, a suspicion of their designs which stirred the Duke of York to action. In addition to other claims which he as yet refrained from urging, he claimed as the descendant of Edmund of Langley, the fifth among the sons of Edward the Third, to be regarded as heir presumptive to the throne. His claim seems to have been a popular one, and on the interruption of the struggle between the two rivals by the severe malady of the King who sank for a year into absolute incapacity, the vote of Parliament appointed York Protector of the Realm. On Henry's recovery, however, the Duke of Somerset, who had been impeached and committed to the Tower by his rival, was restored to power, and supported with singular vigour and audacity by the Queen. York at once took up arms, and backed by some of the most powerful nobles, advanced with 3,000 men upon St. Albans where Henry was encamped. A

1455.

Digitized by Google

successful assault upon the town was crowned by the fall of Somerset, and a return of the King's malady brought the renewal of York's Protectorate. Henry's recovery, however, again restored the supremacy of the House of Beaufort, and after a temporary reconciliation between the two parties York again raised his standard at Ludlow, where he was joined by the Earls of Salisbury and Warwick, the heads of the great house of Neville. After a slight success gained over Lord Audley at Bloreheath, the King marched rapidly on the insurgents, and a decisive battle was only averted by the desertion of a part of the Yorkist army and the disbandment of the rest. The Duke himself fled to Ireland, the Earls to Calais, while the Queen, summoning a Parliament at Coventry, pressed on their attainder. But the check, whatever its cause, had been merely a temporary one. In the following Midsummer the Earls again landed in Kent, and backed by a general rising of the county, entered London amidst the acclamations of its citizens. The Royal army was defeated in a hard-fought action at Northampton, Margaret fled to Scotland, and Henry was left a prisoner in the hands of the Duke of York.

1460.

**The Wars of the Roses.**

The position of York as heir presumptive to the crown had ceased with the birth of a son to Henry the Sixth; but the victory of Northampton no sooner raised him to the supreme control of affairs than he ventured to assert the far more dangerous claims which he had secretly cherished, and to its consciousness of which was owing the bitter hostility of the Royal House. As the descendant of Edmund of Langley he stood only next in succession to the House of Lancaster, but as the descendant of Lionel, the elder brother of John of Gaunt, he stood in strict hereditary right before it. We have already seen how the claims of Lionel had passed to the House of Mortimer: it was through Anne, the heiress of the Mortimers, who had wedded his father, that they passed to the Duke. There was, however, no constitutional ground for any limitation of the right of Parliament to set aside an elder branch in favour of a younger, and in the Parliamentary Act which placed the House of Lancaster on the throne the claim of the House of Mortimer had been deliberately set aside. Possession, too, told against the Yorkist pretensions. To modern minds the best reply to their claim lay in the words used at a later time by Henry himself. "My father was King; his father also was King; I myself have worn the crown forty years from my cradle; you have all sworn fealty to me as your sovereign, and your fathers have done the like to mine. How then can my right be disputed?" Long and undisturbed possession, as well as a distinctly legal title by free vote of Parliament, was in favour of the House of Lancaster. But the persecution of the Lollards, the disfranchisement of the voter, the interference with elections, the odium of the war, the shame of the long mis-government told fatally against the

Digitized by Google

SEC. II.
THE WARS OF THE ROSES.
1450-1471.

weak and imbecile King, whose reign had been a long battle of contending factions. That the misrule had been serious was shown by the attitude of the commercial class. It was the rising of Kent, the great manufacturing district of the realm, which brought about the victory of Northampton. Throughout the struggle which followed London and the great merchant towns were steady for the House of York. Zeal for the Lancastrian cause was found only in the wild Welsh border-lands or in the yet wilder districts of the North and the West. It is absurd to suppose that the shrewd traders of Cheapside were moved by an abstract question of hereditary right, or that the rough borderers of the Marches believed themselves to be supporting the right of Parliament to regulate the succession. But it marks the power which Parliament had now gained that the Duke of York felt himself compelled to convene the two Houses, and to lay his claim before the Lords as a petition of right. Neither oaths nor the numerous Acts which had settled and confirmed the right to the crown in the House of Lancaster could destroy, he pleaded, his hereditary claim. The baronage received the petition with hardly concealed reluctance, and solved the question, as they hoped, by a compromise. They refused to dethrone the King, but they had sworn no fealty to his child, and at Henry's death they agreed to receive the Duke as successor to the crown. But the open display of York's pretensions at once united the partizans of the Royal House, and the deadly struggle which received the name of the Wars of the Roses, from the white rose which formed the badge of the House of York and the red rose which was the cognizance of the House of Lancaster, begun in the gathering of the North round Lord Clifford and of the West round the new Duke of Somerset. York, who had hurried to meet the first with a far inferior force, was defeated and captured at Wakefield, and the
1460. passion of civil war broke fiercely out on the field. The Duke was hurried to the block, and his head, crowned in mockery with a diadem of paper, is said to have been impaled on the walls of York. His boy, Lord Rutland, fell crying for mercy on his knees before Clifford. But Clifford's father had been the first to fall in the battle of St. Albans which opened the struggle. "As your father killed mine," cried the savage Baron while he plunged his dagger in the boy's breast, "I will kill you!" A force of Kentishmen under the Earl of Warwick barred the march of the conquerors on London, but after a desperate struggle
1461. at St. Albans the Yorkist forces broke under cover of night. An immediate march on the capital would have decided the contest, but the conquerors paused to sully their victory by a series of bloody executions, and the rough northerners, whom Margaret had brought up, scattered to pillage, while Edward, Earl of March, the son of the late Duke of York, who had cut his way through a body of Lancastrians at Mortimer's Cross, struck boldly upon London. The citizens rallied at

Digitized by Google

his call and cries of "Long live King Edward" rang round the handsome young leader as he rode through the streets. A council of Yorkist lords, hastily summoned, resolved that the compromise agreed on in Parliament was at an end and that Henry of Lancaster had forfeited the throne. The final issue, however, now lay, not with Parliament, but with the sword. Disappointed of London, the Lancastrian army fell rapidly back on the North, and Edward hurried as rapidly in pursuit.

The two armies encountered one another at Towton Field, near Tadcaster. In the numbers engaged, as well as in the terrible obstinacy of the struggle, no such battle had been seen in England since the fight of Senlac. On either side the armies numbered nearly 60,000 men. The day had just broken when the Yorkists advanced through a thick snow-fall, and for six hours the battle raged with desperate bravery on either side. At one critical moment Warwick saw his men falter, and stabbing his horse before them, swore on the cross of his sword to live or die on the field. At last the Lancastrians slowly gave way, a river in their rear turned the retreat into a rout, and the flight and carnage, for no quarter was given on either side, went on through the night and the morrow. Of the conquered, Edward's herald counted more than 20,000 corpses on the field, and the losses of the conquerors were hardly less heavy. Six barons had fallen in the fight, the Earls of Devon and Wiltshire were taken and beheaded at its close; an enormous bill of attainder wrapt in the same ruin and confiscation all the nobles who still adhered to the House of Lancaster, and the execution of Lords Oxford and Aubrey gave a terrible significance to its clauses. The struggles of Margaret only served to bring fresh calamities on her adherents. A new rising in the North was crushed by the Earl of Warwick, and a legend which lights up the gloom of the time with a gleam of poetry told how the fugitive Queen, after escaping with difficulty from a troop of bandits, found a new brigand in the depths of the wood. With the daring of despair she confided to him her child. "I trust to your loyalty," she said, "the son of your King." Margaret and her child escaped over the border under the robber's guidance, but a new rising in the following year brought about the execution of Somerset and flung Henry into the hands of his enemies. His feet were tied to the stirrups, he was led thrice round the pillory, and then conducted as a prisoner to the Tower.

1463.

**The King-Maker.**

Ruined as feudalism really was by the terrible bloodshed and confiscations of the civil war, it had never seemed so powerful as in the years which followed Towton. Out of the wreck of the baronage a family which had always stood high amongst its fellows towered into unrivalled greatness. Lord Warwick was by descent Earl of Salisbury, a son of the great noble whose support had been mainly instrumental in raising the House of York to the throne. He had doubled his wealth and influence by his acquisition of the Earldom of Warwick, through

Digitized by Google

SEC. II.
THE WARS OF THE ROSES.
1450-1471.

a marriage with the heiress of the Beauchamps. His services at Towton had been munificently rewarded by the grant of vast estates from the Lancastrian confiscations and by his elevation to the highest posts in the service of the State. He was governor of Calais, Lieutenant of Ireland, and Warden of the Western Marches. This personal power was backed by the power of the House of Neville, of which he was the head. Lords Falconberg, Abergavenny, and Latimer were his uncles. His brother, Lord Montagu, had received as his share in the spoil the Earldom of Northumberland, the estates of the Percies, and the command of the Northern border. His younger brother, George, had been raised to the See of York and the office of Lord Chancellor. At first sight the figure of Warwick strikes us as the very type of the feudal baron. He could raise armies at his call from his own earldoms. Six hundred liveried retainers followed him to Parliament. His fame as a military leader had been established by the great victories which crushed the House of Lancaster, as well as by the crowning glory of Towton. Yet few men were ever further, in fact, from the feudal ideal. Active, skilful, ruthless warrior as he was, Warwick—if we believe his contemporaries—had little personal daring. In war he was rather general than soldier. His genius in fact was not so much military as diplomatic; what he excelled in was intrigue, treachery, the contrivance of plots, and sudden desertions. And in the boy-king whom he had raised to the throne he met not merely a consummate general, but a politician whose subtlety and rapidity of conception was destined to leave a deep and enduring mark on the character of the monarchy itself. Edward was but nineteen at his accession, and both his kinship (for he was the King's cousin by blood) and his recent services rendered Warwick during the first three years of his reign all-powerful in the State. But the final ruin of Henry's cause in the battle of Hexham gave the signal for a silent struggle between Edward and his minister. The King's first step was to avow his marriage with the widow of a slain Lancastrian, Dame Elizabeth Grey, and to raise her family to greatness as a counterpoise to the Nevilles. Her father, Lord Rivers, became Constable; her son by the first marriage was wedded to the heiress of the Duke of Exeter, whom Warwick had demanded for his nephew. Warwick's policy lay in a close connection with France; he had been already foiled in negotiating a French marriage for the King, and on his crossing the seas to conclude a marriage of the King's sister, Margaret, with one of the French princes, Edward availed himself of his absence to deprive his brother of the seals, and to wed his sister to the sworn enemy both of France and of Warwick, Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy. For the moment it seemed as if the King's ruin was at hand. In spite of the Royal opposition, Warwick replied to Edward's challenge by the marriage of his daughter with the King's

Digitized by Google

brother, the Duke of Clarence, and a revolt which instantly broke out threw Edward into the hands of his great subject. The terms exacted as the price of the King's release transferred to the Nevilles the succession to the crown, for Edward was still without a son, and Warwick wrested from him the betrothal of his infant daughter to the son of Lord Montagu, the heir of his house. The Earl's ambition, however, was still unsatisfied, and he was advancing to support a new rising which had broken out at his instigation in Lincolnshire, when the rapid march of Edward was followed by a decisive victory over the insurgents. It is hopeless, with the scanty historical materials we possess of this period, to attempt to explain its sudden revolutions of fortune, or the panic which induced Warwick at this trivial check to fly for refuge to France, where the Burgundian connection of Edward secured his enemies the support of Louis the Eleventh. But the unscrupulous temper of the Earl was seen in the alliance which he at once concluded with the partizans of the House of Lancaster. On the promise of Queen Margaret to wed her son to his daughter Anne, Warwick engaged to restore the crown to the royal captive whom he had flung into the Tower; and choosing a moment when Edward was busy with a revolt in the North and when a storm had dispersed the Burgundian fleet which defended the Channel, he threw himself boldly on the English shore. Kent rose in his support as he disembarked, and the desertion of Lord Montagu, whom Edward still trusted, drove the King in turn to seek shelter over sea. While Edward fled with a handful of adherents to the Court of Burgundy, Henry of Lancaster was again conducted from his prison to the throne, but the bitter hate of the party Warwick had so ruthlessly crushed found no gratitude for the "King-Maker." His own conduct, as well as that of his party, when Edward again disembarked in the spring at Ravenspur, showed a weariness of the new alliance, quickened perhaps by their dread of Margaret, whose return to England was hourly expected. Passing through the Lancastrian districts of the North with a declaration that he waived all right to the crown and sought only his own hereditary duchy, Edward was left unassailed by an overwhelming force which Montagu had collected, was joined on his march by his brother Clarence who had throughout acted in concert with Warwick, and was admitted into London by Warwick's brother, the Archbishop of York. Encamped at Coventry, the Earl himself opened negotiations with Edward for a new desertion, but the King was now strong enough to fling off the mask, and Warwick, desperate of a reconciliation, marched suddenly on London. The battle of Barnet, a medley of carnage and treachery which lasted six hours, ended with the fall of Warwick as he fled for hiding to the woods. Margaret had landed too late to bring aid to her great partizan, but the military triumph of Edward was

1471.

Digitized by Google

SEC. II.
THE WARS OF THE ROSES.
1450-1471.

completed by the skilful strategy with which he forced her army to battle at Tewkesbury, and by its complete overthrow. The Queen herself became a captive; her boy fell on the field, stabbed—as was affirmed—by the Yorkist lords after Edward had met his cry for mercy by a buffet from his gauntlet; and the death of Henry in the Tower crushed the last hopes of the House of Lancaster.

### Section III:—The New Monarchy: 1471-1509.

[*Authorities.*—To those we have already mentioned, we may add the "Letters and Papers of Richard III. and Henry VII." edited by Mr. Gairdner for the Master of the Rolls, as well as Hall's Chronicle, which extends from Henry the Fourth to Henry the Eighth. Edward the Fifth is the subject of a work by Sir Thomas More, which probably derives much of its information from Archbishop Morton, and is remarkable as the first historical work of any literary value which we possess in our modern prose. A biography of Henry the Seventh is among the works of Lord Bacon. Miss Hasted, in her "Life of Richard III.," has elaborately illustrated a reign of some constitutional importance. For Caxton, see the admirable biography and bibliographical account by Mr. Blades.]

**The New Monarchy.**

There are few periods in our annals from which we turn with such weariness and disgust as from the Wars of the Roses. Its thick crowd of savage battles, its ruthless executions, its shameless treasons seem all the more terrible from the pure selfishness of the ends for which men fought, the utter want of all nobleness and chivalry in the struggle itself, of all great result in its close. But even while the contest was raging the cool eye of a philosophic statesman could find in it matter for other feelings than those of mere disgust. England presented to Philippe de Commines the rare spectacle of a land where, brutal as was the civil strife, "there are no buildings destroyed or demolished by war, and where the mischief of it falls on those who make the war." The ruin and bloodshed were limited, in fact, to the great lords and their feudal retainers. Once or twice indeed, as at Towton, the towns threw themselves into the struggle on the Yorkist side, but for the most part the trading and industrial classes stood wholly apart from, and unaffected by it. Commerce went on unchecked, and indeed developed itself through the closer friendship with Flanders and the House of Burgundy more rapidly than at any former period. The general tranquillity of the country at large, while feudalism was dashing itself to pieces in battle after battle, was shown by the remarkable fact that justice remained wholly undisturbed. The law courts sate quietly at Westminster, the judges rode as of old in circuit, the system of jury-trial (though the jurors were still expected to use their local and personal knowledge of the case) took more and more its modern form by the separation of the jurors from the witnesses. But if the common view of

Digitized by Google

England during these Wars as a mere chaos of treason and bloodshed is a false one, still more false is the common view of the pettiness of their result. The Wars of the Roses did far more than ruin one Royal House or set up another on the throne. If they did not utterly destroy English freedom, they arrested its progress for more than a hundred years. They found England, in the words of Commines, "among all the world's lordships of which I have knowledge, that where the public weal is best ordered, and where least violence reigns over the people." A King of England—the shrewd observer noticed—"can undertake no enterprise of account without assembling his Parliament, which is a thing most wise and holy, and therefore are these Kings stronger and better served" than the despotic sovereigns of the Continent. England, as one of its judges, Sir John Fortescue, could boast to Edward the Fourth himself, was not an absolute but a limited monarchy; not a land where the will of the prince was itself the law, but where the prince could neither make laws nor impose taxes save by his subjects' consent. At no time had Parliament played so constant and prominent a part in the government of the realm. At no time had the principles of constitutional liberty seemed so thoroughly understood and so dear to the people at large. The long Parliamentary contest between the Crown and the two Houses since the days of Edward the First had firmly established the great securities of national liberty—the right of freedom from arbitrary taxation, from arbitrary legislation, from arbitrary imprisonment, and the responsibility of even the highest servants of the Crown to Parliament and to the law. But with the close of the war of the Succession freedom suddenly disappears. We enter on an epoch of constitutional retrogression in which the slow work of the age that went before it is rapidly undone. Parliamentary life is almost suspended, or is turned into a form by the overpowering influence of the Crown. The legislative powers of the two Houses are usurped by the Royal Council. Arbitrary taxation re-appears in benevolences and forced loans. Personal liberty is almost extinguished by a formidable spy-system and by the constant practice of arbitrary imprisonment. Justice is degraded by the prodigal use of bills of attainder, by the wide extension of the judicial power of the Royal Council, by the servility of judges, by the coercion of juries. If we seek a reason for so sudden and complete a revolution, we find it in the disappearance of feudalism, in other words of that organisation of society in which our constitutional liberty had till now found its security. Freedom had been won by the sword of the Baronage. Its tradition had been watched over by the jealousy of the Church. The new class of the Commons which had grown from the union of the country squire and the town trader was widening its sphere of political activity as it grew. But with the battle of Towton feudalism vanished away. The baronage lay a mere wreck

Digitized by Google

SEC. III.
THE NEW MONARCHY.
1471-1509.

after the storm of the civil war. The Church lingered helpless and perplexed, till it was struck down by Thomas Cromwell. The traders and the smaller proprietors sank into political inactivity. On the other hand, the Crown, which only fifty years before had been the sport of every faction, towered into solitary greatness. The old English Kingship, limited by the forces of feudalism or by the progress of constitutional freedom, faded suddenly away, and in its place we see, all-absorbing and unrestrained, the despotism of the New Monarchy.

**Causes of the New Monarchy.**

If we use the name of the New Monarchy to express the character of the English sovereignty from the time of Edward the Fourth to the time of Elizabeth, it is because the character of the Monarchy during this period was something wholly new in our history. There is no kind of similarity between the Kingship of the Old-English, of the Norman, the Angevin, or the Plantagenet sovereigns, and the Kingship of the Tudors. The difference between them was the result, not of any gradual development, but of a simple revolution ; and it was only by a revolution that the despotism of the New Monarchy was again done away. When the lawyers of the Long Parliament fell back for their precedents of constitutional liberty to the reign of the House of Lancaster, and silently regarded the whole period which we are about to traverse as a blank, they expressed not merely a legal truth but an historical one. What the Great Rebellion in its final result actually did was to wipe away every trace of the New Monarchy, and to take up again the thread of our political development just where it had been snapt by the Wars of the Roses. But revolutionary as the change was, we have already seen in their gradual growth the causes which brought about the revolution. The social organization from which our political constitution had hitherto sprung and on which it still rested had been silently sapped by the progress of industry, by the growth of spiritual and intellectual enlightenment, and by changes in the art of war. Its ruin was precipitated by religious persecution, by the disfranchisement of the Commons, and by the slaughter of the Baronage in the civil strife. The great Houses were all but exterminated, or lingered only in obscure branches which were mere shadows of their former greatness. With the exception of the Poles, the Stanleys, and the Howards, themselves families of recent origin, hardly a fragment of the older baronage remained to claim any share in the work of government. Neither the Church nor the smaller proprietors of the country, who with the merchant classes formed the Commons, were ready to take the place of the ruined nobles. Imposing as the great ecclesiastical body still seemed from the memories of its past, its immense wealth, its tradition of statesmanship, it was rendered powerless by a want of spiritual life, by a moral inertness, by its antagonism to the deeper

Digitized by Google

religious convictions of the people, and its blind hostility to the intellectual movement which was beginning to stir the world. Conscious of the want of popular favour and jealous only for the preservation of their vast estates, the Churchmen, who had clung for protection to the Baronage, clung on its fall for protection to the Crown. Prelates like Morton and Warham devoted themselves to the Royal Council-board with the simple view of averting by means of the Monarchy the pillage of the Church. But in any wider political sense the influence of the body to which they belonged was insignificant. From the time of the Lollard outbreak the attitude of the Church is timid as that of a hunted thing. It is less obvious at first sight why the Commons should share the political ruin of the Church and the Lords, for the smaller county proprietors were growing enormously, both in wealth and numbers, at this moment through the fall of the great Houses and the dispersion of their vast estates, while the burgess class, as we have seen, was deriving fresh riches from the development of trade. But the result of the narrowing of the franchise and of the tampering with elections was now felt in the political insignificance of the Lower House. Reduced by these measures to a virtual dependence on the Baronage, it fell with the fall of the class to which it looked for guidance and support. And while its rival forces disappeared, the Monarchy stood ready to take their place. Not only indeed were the Churchman, the squire, and the burgess powerless to vindicate liberty against the Crown, but the very interests of self-preservation led them at this moment to lay freedom at its feet. The Church still trembled at the progress of heresy. The close corporations of the towns needed protection for their privileges. The landowner shared with the trader a profound horror of the war and disorder which they had witnessed, and an almost reckless desire to entrust the Crown with any power which would prevent its return. But above all, the landed and monied classes clung passionately to the Monarchy, as the one great force left which could save them from social revolt. The rising of the Commons of Kent shows that the troubles against which the Statutes of Labourers had been directed still remained as a formidable source of discontent. The great change in the character of agriculture indeed, which we have before described, the throwing together of the smaller holdings, the diminution of tillage, the increase of pasture lands, had tended largely to swell the numbers and turbulence of the floating labour class. The riots against "enclosures," of which we first hear in the time of Henry the Sixth, and which became a constant feature of the Tudor period, are indications not only of a constant strife going on in every quarter between the landowner and the smaller peasant class, but of a mass of social discontent which was constantly seeking an outlet in violence and revolution. And at this moment the break up of the

Digitized by Google

SEC. III.
THE NEW MONARCHY
1471-1509.

military households of the nobles by the attainders and confiscations of the Wars of the Roses, as well as by the Statute of Liveries which followed them, added a new element of violence and disorder to the seething mass. It is this social danger which lies at the root of the Tudor despotism. For the proprietary classes the repression of the poor was a question of life and death. The landowner and the merchant were ready, as they have been ready in all ages of the world, to surrender freedom into the hands of the one power which could preserve them from what they deemed to be anarchy. It was to the selfish panic of the wealthier landowners that England owed the Statutes of Labourers, with their terrible heritage of a pauper class. It was to the selfish panic of both the landowner and the merchant that she owed the despotism of the New Monarchy.

**Edward the Fourth.**

The founder of the New Monarchy was Edward the Fourth. As a mere boy he showed himself the ablest and the most pitiless among the warriors of the civil war. In the first flush of manhood he looked on with a cool ruthlessness while grey-haired nobles were hurried to the block, or while his Lancastrian child-rival was stabbed at his feet. In his later race for power he had shown himself more subtle in his treachery than even Warwick himself. His triumph was no sooner won however than the young King seemed to abandon himself to a voluptuous indolence, to revels with the city-wives of London and the caresses of his mistress, Jane Shore. Tall in stature and of singular beauty, his winning manners and gay carelessness of bearing secured him a popularity which had been denied to nobler kings. But his indolence and gaiety were mere veils beneath which Edward shrouded a profound political ability. No one could contrast more utterly in outer appearance with the subtle sovereigns of his time, with Louis the Eleventh or Ferdinand of Arragon, but his work was the same as theirs, and it was done even more completely. While jesting with aldermen, or dallying with his mistresses, or idling over the new pages from the printing-press at Westminster, Edward was silently laying the foundations of an absolute rule which Henry the Seventh did little more than develop and consolidate. The almost total discontinuance of Parliamentary life was in itself a revolution. Up to this moment the two Houses had played a part which became more and more prominent in the government of the realm. Under the two first Kings of the House of Lancaster they had been summoned almost every year. Not only had the right of self-taxation and initiation of laws been yielded explicitly to the Commons, but they had taken part in the work of Government itself, had directed the application of subsidies and called the Royal ministers to account by Parliamentary impeachments. Under Henry the Sixth an important step in constitutional progress had been made by abandoning the old form of presenting the requests of the Parliament in the form

Digitized by Google

of petitions which were subsequently moulded into statutes by the Royal Council; the statute itself, in its final form, was now presented for the Royal assent, and the Crown was deprived of its former privilege of modifying it. Not only does this progress cease, but the legislative activity of Parliament itself comes abruptly to an end. The reign of Edward the Fourth is the first since that of John in which not a single law which promoted freedom or remedied the abuses of power was even proposed to Parliament. The necessity for summoning the two Houses had, in fact, been removed by the enormous tide of wealth which the confiscations of the civil war poured into the Royal Treasury. In the single bill of attainder which followed the victory of Towton, twelve great nobles and more than a hundred knights and squires were stripped of their estates to the King's profit. It was said that nearly a fifth of the land had passed into the Royal possession at one period or another of the civil war. Edward added to his resources by trading on a vast scale. The Royal ships, freighted with tin, wool, and cloth, made the name of the merchant-king famous in the ports of Italy and Greece. The enterprises he planned against France, though frustrated by the refusal of Charles of Burgundy to co-operate with him in them, afforded a fresh financial resource; and the subsidies granted for a war which never took place swelled the Royal exchequer. But the pretext of war enabled Edward not only to increase his hoard, but to deal a deadly blow at liberty. Setting aside the usage of loans sanctioned by the authority of Parliament, Edward called before him the merchants of the city and requested from each a present or "benevolence," in proportion to the need. Their compliance with his prayer was probably aided by his popularity with the merchant class, but the system of "benevolence" was soon to be developed into the forced loans of Wolsey and the Ship-money of Charles the First. It was to Edward that his Tudor successors owed their elaborate spy-system, the introduction of the rack into the Tower, and the practice of Royal interference with the purity of justice. In the history of intellectual progress alone his reign takes a brighter colour, and the founder of the New Monarchy presents his one solitary claim to our regard as the patron of Caxton.

1274.

Literature indeed seemed at this moment to have died as utterly as freedom itself. The genius of Chaucer, and of the one or more poets whose works have been confounded with Chaucer's, defied for a while the pedantry, the affectation, the barrenness of their age; but the sudden close of this poetic outburst left England to a crowd of poetasters, compilers, scribblers of interminable moralities, rimers of chronicles, and translators from the worn-out field of French romance. Some faint trace of the liveliness and beauty of older models lingers among the heavy platitudes of Gower, but

**Literature after Chaucer.**

Digitized by Google

SEC. III.
THE NEW MONARCHY.
1471-1509.

even this vanished from the didactic puerilities, the prosaic commonplaces, of Occleve and Lydgate. The literature of the Middle Ages was dying out with the Middle Ages themselves; in letters as in life their thirst for knowledge had spent itself in the barren mazes of the scholastic philosophy, their ideal of warlike nobleness faded away before the gaudy travestie of a spurious chivalry, and the mystic enthusiasm of their devotion shrunk at the touch of persecution into a narrow orthodoxy and a flat morality. The clergy, who had concentrated in themselves the intellectual effort of the older time, were ceasing to be an intellectual class at all. Their monasteries were no longer seats of learning. "I found in them," said Poggio, an Italian traveller twenty years after Chaucer's death, "men given up to sensuality in abundance, but very few lovers of learning, and those of a barbarous sort, skilled more in quibbles and sophisms than in literature." The erection of colleges, which was beginning, could not arrest the quick decline of the universities both in numbers and learning. The students at Oxford amounted to but a fifth of those who had attended its lectures a century before, and "Oxford Latin" became proverbial for a jargon in which the very tradition of grammar had been lost. All literary production was nearly at an end; there is not a single work, for instance, either in Latin or English which we can refer to the ten years of the reign of Edward the Fourth. Historical composition lingered on indeed in compilations of extracts from past writers, such as make up the so-called works of Walsingham, in jejune monastic annals like those of St. Albans, or worthless popular compendiums like those of Fabyan and Harding. But the only real trace of mental activity is to be found in the numerous treatises on alchemy and magic, on the elixir of life or the philosopher's stone, the fungous growth which most unequivocally witnesses to the progress of intellectual decay. On the other hand, while the purely literary class was thus dying out, a glance beneath the surface shows us the stir of a new interest in knowledge among the masses of the people itself. Books are far from being the only indication of a people's progress in knowledge, and the correspondence of the Paston family, which has been happily preserved, displays a fluency and vivacity as well as a grammatical correctness which would have been impossible in familiar letters a hundred years before. The very character of the authorship of the time, its love of compendiums and abridgements of the scientific and historical knowledge of its day, its dramatic performances or mysteries, the commonplace morality of its poets, the popularity of its rhymed chronicles are additional proofs that literature was ceasing to be the possession of a purely intellectual class and was now beginning to appeal to the people at large. The increased use of linen paper in place of the costlier parchment helped in the popularization

Digitized by Google

of letters. In no former age had finer copies of books been produced; in none had so many been transcribed. Abroad this increased demand for their production caused the processes of copying and illuminating manuscripts to be transferred from the scriptoria of the religious houses into the hands of trade-guilds, like the Guild of St. John at Bruges, or the Brothers of the Pen at Brussels. It was, in fact, this increase of demand for books, pamphlets, or fly-sheets, especially of a grammatical or religious character, in the middle of the fifteenth century that brought about the introduction of printing. We meet with it first in rude sheets simply struck off from wooden blocks, "block-books" as they are now called, and later on in works printed from separate and moveable types. Originating at Maintz with the three famous printers, Gutenberg, Fust, and Schœffer, the new process travelled southward to Strasburg, crossed the Alps to Venice, where it lent itself through the Aldi to the spread of Greek literature in Europe, and then floated down the Rhine to Cologne and the towns of Flanders. It was probably at the press of Colard Mansion, in a little room over the porch of St. Donat's at Bruges, that Caxton learnt the art which he was the first to introduce into England.

**Caxton.**

A Kentish boy by birth, but apprenticed to a London Mercer, William Caxton had already spent thirty years of his manhood in Flanders, as Governor of the English guild of Merchant Adventurers there, when we find him engaged as copyist in the service of the Duchess of Burgundy. But the tedious process of copying was soon thrown aside for the new art which Colard Mansion had introduced into Bruges. "For as much as in the writing of the same," Caxton tells us in the preface to his first printed work, the Tales of Troy, "my pen is worn, my hand weary and not steadfast, mine eyes dimmed with over much looking on the white paper, and my courage not so prone and ready to labour as it hath been, and that age creepeth on me daily and feebleth all the body, and also because I have promised to divers gentlemen and to my friends to address to them as hastily as I might the said book, therefore I have practised and learned at my great charge and dispense to ordain this said book in print after the manner and form as ye may see, and is not written with pen and ink as other books be, to the end that every man may have them at once, for all the books of this story here emprynted as ye see were begun in one day and also finished in one day." The printing press was the precious freight he brought back to England, after an absence of five-and-thirty years. Through the next fifteen, at an age when other men look for ease and retirement, we see him plunging with characteristic energy into his new occupation. His "red pole" invited buyers to the press established in the Almonry at Westminster, a little enclosure containing a chapel and almshouses (swept away

1476.



Digitized by Google

SEC. III. THE NEW MONARCHY. 1471-1509.

since Caxton's time by later buildings) near the west front of the church, where the alms of the abbey were distributed to the poor. "If it please any man, spiritual or temporal," runs his advertisement, "to buy any pyes of two or three commemorations of Salisbury all emprinted after the form of the present letter, which be well and truly correct, let him come to Westminster into the Almonry at the red pole, and he shall have them good chepe." He was a practical man of business, as this advertisement shows, no rival of the Venetian Aldi or of the classical printers of Rome, but resolved to get a living from his trade, supplying priests with service books, and preachers with sermons, furnishing the clerk with his "Golden Legend," and knight and baron with "joyous and pleasant histories of chivalry." But while careful to win his daily bread, he found time to do much for what of higher literature lay fairly to hand. He printed all the English poetry of any moment which was then in existence. His reverence for "that worshipful man, Geoffry Chaucer," who "ought eternally to be remembered," is shown not merely by his edition of the "Canterbury Tales," but by his reprint of them when a purer text of the poem offered itself. The poems of Lydgate and Gower were soon added to those of Chaucer. The Chronicle of Brut and Higden's "Polychronicon" were the only available works of an historical character then existing in the English tongue, and Caxton not only printed them but himself continued the latter up to his own time. A translation of Boethius, a version of the Eneid from the French, and a tract or two of Cicero, were the stray first-fruits of the classical press in England.

**Caxton's Translations.**

Busy as was Caxton's printing-press, he was even busier as a translator than as a printer. More than four thousand of his printed pages are from works of his own rendering. The need of these translations shows the popular drift of literature at the time; but keen as the demand seems to have been, there is nothing mechanical in the temper with which Caxton prepared to meet it. A natural, simple-hearted literary taste and enthusiasm, especially for the style and forms of language, breaks out in his curious prefaces. "Having no work in hand," he says in the preface to his Eneid, "I sitting in my study where as lay many divers pamphlets and books, happened that to my hand came a little book in French, which late was translated out of Latin by some noble clerk of France—which book is named Eneydos, and made in Latin by that noble poet and great clerk Vergyl—in which book I had great pleasure by reason of the fair and honest termes and wordes in French which I never saw to-fore-like, none so pleasant nor so well ordered, which book as me seemed should be much requisite for noble men to see, as well for the eloquence as the histories; and when I had advised me to this said book I deliberated and concluded to translate it into English, and forthwith took

Digitized by Google

a pen and ink and wrote a leaf or twain." But the work of translation involved a choice of English which made Caxton's work important in the history of our language. He stood between two schools of translation, that of French affectation and English pedantry. It was a moment when the character of our literary tongue was being settled, and it is curious to see in his own words the struggle over it which was going on in Caxton's time. "Some honest and great clerks have been with me and desired me to write the most curious terms that I could find;" on the other hand, "some gentlemen of late blamed me, saying that in my translations I had over many curious terms which could not be understood of common people, and desired me to use old and homely terms in my translations." "Fain would I please every man," comments the good-humoured printer, but his sturdy sense saved him alike from the temptations of the court and the schools. His own taste pointed to English, but "to the common terms that be daily used" rather than to the English of his antiquarian advisers. "I took an old book and read therein, and certainly the English was so rude and broad I could not well understand it," while the Old-English charters which the Abbot of Westminster fetched as models from the archives of his house, seemed "more like to Dutch than to English." On the other hand, to adopt current phraseology was by no means easy at a time when even the speech of common talk was in a state of rapid flux. "Our language now used varieth far from that which was used and spoken when I was born." Not only so, but the tongue of each shire was still peculiar to itself, and hardly intelligible to men of another county. "Common English that is spoken in one shire varieth from another so much, that in my days happened that certain merchants were in a ship in Thames, for to have sailed over the sea into Zealand, and for lack of wind they tarried at Foreland, and went on land for to refresh them. And one of them, named Sheffield, a mercer, came into a house and asked for meat, and especially he asked them after eggs. And the good wife answered that she could speak no French. And the merchant was angry, for he also could speak no French, but would have had eggs, but she understood him not. And then at last another said he would have eyren, then the good wife said she understood him well. Lo! what should a man in these days now write," adds the puzzled printer, "eggs or eyren? certainly it is hard to please everyman by cause of diversity and change of language." His own mother-tongue, too was that of "Kent in the Weald, where I doubt not is spoken as broad and rude English as in any place of England;" and coupling this with his long absence in Flanders, we can hardly wonder at the confession he makes over his first translation, that "when all these things came to fore me, after that I had made and written a five or six quires, I fell in despair of this work, and



Digitized by Google

**Literature and the Nobles.**
1491.

purposed never to have continued therein, and the quires laid apart, and in two years after laboured no more in this work."

He was still, however, busy translating when he died. All difficulties, in fact, were lightened by the general interest which his labours aroused. When the length of the "Golden Legend" makes him "half desperate to have accomplisht it" and ready to "lay it apart," the Earl of Arundel solicits him in nowise to leave it and promises a yearly fee of a buck in summer and a doe in winter, once it were done. "Many noble and divers gentle men of this realm came and demanded many and often times wherefore I have not made and imprinted the noble history of the 'San Graal.'" We see his visitors discussing with the sagacious printer the historic existence of Arthur. Duchess Margaret of Somerset lends him her "Blanchadine and Eglantine;" the Archdeacon of Colchester brings him his translation of the work called "Cato;" a mercer of London presses him to undertake the "Royal Book" of Philip le Bel. The Queen's brother, Earl Rivers, chats with him over his own translation of the "Sayings of the Philosophers." Even kings showed their interest in his work; his "Tully" was printed under the patronage of Edward the Fourth, his "Order of Chivalry" dedicated to Richard the Third, his "Facts of Arms" published at the desire of Henry the Seventh. The Royal Houses of York and Lancaster, in fact, rivalled each other in their patronage of such literature as they could find. The fashion of large and gorgeous libraries had passed from the French to the English princes of the time: Henry the Sixth had a valuable collection of books; that of the Louvre was seized by Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, and formed the basis of the fine library which he presented to the University of Oxford. The great nobles took a far more active and personal part in the literary revival. The warrior, Sir John Fastolf, was a well-known lover of books. Earl Rivers was himself one of the authors of the day; he found leisure in the intervals of pilgrimages and politics to translate the "Sayings of the Philosophers" and a couple of religious tracts for Caxton's press. A friend of far greater intellectual distinction, however, than these was found in John Tiptoft Earl of Worcester. He had wandered during the reign of Henry the Sixth in search of learning to Italy, had studied at her universities, and become a teacher at Padua, where the elegance of his Latinity drew tears from one of the most learned of the Popes, Pius the Second, better known as Æneas Sylvius. Caxton can find no words warm enough to express his admiration of one "which in his time flowered in virtue and cunning, to whom I know none like among the lords of the temporality in science and moral virtue." But the ruthlessness of the Renascence appeared in Tiptoft side by side with its intellectual vigour, and the fall of one whose cruelty had earned him the surname of "the Butcher" even amidst the horrors of the civil war

Digitized by Google

was greeted with sorrow by none but the faithful printer. "What great loss was it," he says in a preface long after his fall, "of that noble, virtuous, and well-disposed lord; when I remember and advertise his life, his science, and his virtue, me thinketh (God not displeased) over great a loss of such a man, considering his estate and cunning."

**Richard the Third**

Among the group who encouraged the press of Caxton we have already seen the figure of the King's young brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester. Able and ruthless as Edward himself, the Duke had watched keenly the increase of public discontent as his brother's policy developed itself, and had founded on it a scheme of daring ambition. On the King's death Richard hastened to secure the person of his Royal nephew, Edward the Fifth, to hurry the Queen's family to execution, and to receive from the hands of Parliament the office of Protector of the realm. As yet he had acted in strict union with the Royal Council, but hardly a month had passed, when suddenly entering the Council chamber, he charged Lord Hastings, the favourite minister of the late King, who still presided over its meetings, with sorcery and designs upon his life. As he dashed his hand upon the table the room was filled with soldiers. "I will not dine," said the Duke, addressing Hastings, "till they have brought me your head;" and the powerful minister was hurried to instant execution in the court-yard or the Tower. His colleagues were thrown into prison, and every check on the Duke's designs was removed. Edward's marriage had always been unpopular, and Richard ventured, on the plea of a pre-contract on his brother's part, to declare it invalid and its issue illegitimate. Only one step remained to be taken, and a month after his brother's death the Duke listened with a show of reluctance to the prayer of the Parliament, and consented to accept the crown. Daring, however, as was his natural temper, it was not to mere violence that he trusted in this seizure of the throne. The personal popularity of Edward had hardly restrained the indignation with which the nation felt the gradual approach of tyranny throughout his reign; and it was as the restorer of its older liberties that Richard appealed for popular support. "We be determined," said the citizens of London in a petition to the new monarch, "rather to adventure and to commit us to the peril of our lives and jeopardy of death, than to live in such thraldom and bondage as we have lived long time heretofore, oppressed and injured by extortions and new impositions against the laws of God and man and the liberty and laws of this realm, wherein every Englishman is inherited." The new King met the appeal by again convoking Parliament, which, as we have seen, had been all but discontinued under Edward, and by sweeping measures of reform. In the one session of his brief reign he declared the practice of extorting money by "benevolences" illegal, while numerous grants of

1483.

Digitized by Google

SEC. III.
THE NEW MONARCHY.
1471-1509.

pardons and remission of forfeitures reversed in some measure the policy of terror by which Edward at once held the country in awe and filled his treasury. The energy of the new government was seen in the numerous statutes which broke the slumbers of Parliamentary legislation. A series of mercantile enactments strove to protect the growing interests of English commerce. The King's interest in literature showed itself in the provision that no statutes should act as a hindrance "to any artificer or merchant stranger, of what nation or country he be, for bringing unto this realm or selling by retail or otherwise of any manner of books, written or imprinted." His prohibition of the iniquitous seizure of goods before conviction of felony, which had prevailed during Edward's reign, his liberation of the bondmen who still remained unenfranchised on the Royal domain, and his religious foundations, show Richard's keen anxiety to purchase a popularity in which the bloody opening of his reign might be forgotten. But the gratitude which he had earned by his restoration of the older liberty was swept away in the universal horror at a new deed of blood. His young nephews, Edward the Fifth and his brother, the Duke of York, had been flung at his accession into the Tower; and the sudden disappearance of the two boys, murdered, as it was alleged, by their uncle's order, united the whole nation against him. Morton, the exiled Bishop of Ely, took advantage of the general hatred and of the common hostility of both Yorkists and Lancastrians to the Royal murderer to link both parties in a wide conspiracy. Of the line of John of Gaunt no lawful issue remained, but the House of Somerset had sprung, as we have seen, from his union with his mistress Catherine Swynford, and the last representative of this line, the Lady Margaret Beaufort, had married Edmund Tudor and become the mother of Henry, Earl of Richmond. In the bill which in other respects legitimated the Beauforts the right of succession to the throne had been expressly reserved, but as the last remaining scion of the line of Lancaster Henry's claim to it was acknowledged by the partizans of his House, and he had been driven to seek a refuge in Brittany from the jealous hostility of the Yorkist sovereigns. Morton, who had joined him in his exile, induced him to take advantage of the horror with which Richard was regarded even by the Yorkists themselves, and to unite both parties in his favour by a promise of marriage with Margaret, the eldest daughter of Edward the Fourth. The result of this masterly policy was seen as soon as the Earl landed, in spite of Richard's vigilance, at Milford Haven, and advanced through Wales. He no sooner encountered the Royal army at Bosworth Field in Leicestershire than treachery decided the
1485 day. Abandoned ere the battle began by a division of his forces under Lord Stanley, and as it opened by a second body under the Earl of Northumberland, Richard dashed, with a cry of "Treason,

Digitized by Google

Treason," into the thick of the fight. In the fury of his despair he had already flung the Lancastrian standard to the ground and hewed his way into the very presence of his rival, when he fell overpowered by numbers, and the crown which he had worn, and which was found as the struggle ended lying near a hawthorn bush, was placed on the head of the conqueror.

**Henry the Seventh.**

With the accession of Henry the Seventh ended the long bloodshed of the civil wars. The two warring lines were united by his marriage with Elizabeth: his only dangerous rivals were removed by the successive executions of the nephews of Edward the Fourth, the Earl of Warwick (a son of Edward's brother the Duke of Clarence) and John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln (a son of Edward's sister) who had been acknowledged as his successor by Richard the Third. Two remarkable impostors succeeded for a time in exciting formidable revolts, Lambert Simnel, the son of a joiner at Oxford, under the name of the Earl of Warwick, and Perkin Warbeck, a native of Tournay, who personated the Duke of York, the second of the children murdered in the Tower. Defeat, however, reduced the first to the post of scullion in the Royal kitchen; and the second, after far stranger adventures, and the recognition of his claims by the Kings of Scotland and France, as well as by the Duchess-Dowager of Burgundy, whom he claimed as his aunt, was captured and brought to the block. Revolt only proved more clearly the strength which had been given to the New Monarchy by the revolution which had taken place in the art of war. The introduction of gunpowder had ruined feudalism. The mounted and heavily-armed knight gave way to the meaner footman. Fortresses which had been impregnable against the attacks of the Middle Ages crumbled before the new artillery. Although gunpowder had been in use as early as Cressy it was not till the accession of the House of Lancaster that it was really brought into effective employment as a military resource. But the revolution in warfare was immediate. The wars of Henry the Fifth were wars of sieges. The "Last of the Barons," as Warwick has picturesquely been styled, relied mainly on his train of artillery. Artillery gave Henry the Seventh his easy victory over a rising of the Cornish insurgents, the most formidable danger which threatened his throne. The strength which the change gave to the Crown was, in fact, almost irresistible. Throughout the Middle Ages the call of a great baron had been enough to raise a formidable revolt. Yeomen and retainers took down the bow from their chimney corner, knights buckled on their armour, and in a few days an army threatened the throne. But without artillery such an army was now helpless, and the one train of artillery in the kingdom lay at the disposal of the King. It was the consciousness of his strength which enabled the new sovereign to quietly resume the policy of Edward the Fourth. He was forced, indeed, by the circumstances

Digitized by Google

SEC. III.
THE NEW MONARCHY.
1471-1509.

of his descent to base his right to the throne on a purely Parliamentary title. Without reference either to the claim of blood or conquest, the Houses enacted simply "that the inheritance of the Crown should be, rest, remain, and abide in the most Royal person of their sovereign lord, King Henry the Seventh, and the heirs of his body lawfully ensuing." But the policy of Edward was faithfully followed, and Parliament was only once convened during the last thirteen years of Henry's reign. The chief aim, indeed, of the King appeared to be the accumulation of a treasure which should relieve him from the need of appealing for its aid. Subsidies granted for the support of a war with France, which Henry evaded, were carefully hoarded by his grasping economy, and swelled by the revival of dormant claims of the crown, by the exaction of fines for the breach of forgotten tenures, and by a host of petty extortions. The discontinuance of Parliament was followed by the revival of Benevolences. A dilemma of his favourite minister, which received the name of "Morton's fork," extorted gifts to the exchequer from men who lived handsomely on the ground that their wealth was manifest, and from those who lived plainly on the plea that economy had made them wealthy. So successful were these efforts that at the end of his reign Henry bequeathed a hoard of two millions to his successor. The same imitation of Edward's policy was seen in Henry's civil government. Broken as was the strength of the baronage, there still remained lords whom the new monarch watched with a jealous solicitude. Their power lay in the hosts of disorderly retainers who swarmed round their houses, ready to furnish a force in case of revolt, while in peace they became centres of outrage and defiance to the law. Edward had ordered the dissolution of these military households in his Statute of Liveries, and the statute was enforced by Henry with the utmost severity. On a visit to the Earl of Oxford, one of the most devoted adherents of the Lancastrian cause, the King found two long lines of liveried retainers drawn up to receive him. "I thank you for your good cheer, my Lord," said Henry as they parted, "but I may not endure to have my laws broken in my sight. My attorney must speak with you." The Earl was glad to escape with a fine of £10,000. It was with a special view to the suppression of this danger that Henry revived the criminal jurisdiction of the Royal Council, which had almost fallen into desuetude, and whose immense development at a later time furnished his son with his readiest instrument of tyranny. A yet more dangerous innovation, the law which enabled justices of assize or of the peace to try all cases save those of treason and felony without a jury, may have been a merely temporary measure for the redress of disorder, and was repealed at the opening of the next reign. But steady as was the drift of Henry's policy in the direction of despotism, we see no traces of the originality or genius with which

Digitized by Google

the fancy of later historians has invested him. His temper, silent, jealous, but essentially commonplace, was content to follow out, tamely and patiently, the plans of Edward, without anticipating the more terrible policy of Wolsey or of Cromwell. Wrapt in schemes of foreign intrigue, to which we shall afterwards refer, he looked with dread and suspicion on the one movement which broke the apathy of his reign, the great intellectual revolution which bears the name of the Revival of Letters.

### Section IV.—The New Learning. 1509—1520.

[*Authorities.*—The general literary history of this period is fully and accurately given by Mr. Hallam ("Literature of Europe"), and in a confused but interesting way by Warton ("History of English Poetry"). The best and most accessible edition in England of the typical book of the Revival, More's "Utopia," is that published and edited by Mr. Arber ("English Reprints," 1869). The history of Erasmus in England may be followed in his own entertaining Letters, abstracts of some of which will be found in the well-known biography by Jortin. Colet's work and the theological aspect of the Revival has been admirably described by Mr. Seebohm ("The Oxford Reformers of 1498"); for Warham's share, I have ventured to borrow a little from a paper of mine on "Lambeth and the Archbishops," in *Macmillan's Magazine.*]

**The New Learning.**

While England cowered before the horrors of civil war, or slumbered beneath the apathetic rule of Henry the Seventh, the world around her was passing through changes more momentous than any it had witnessed since the victory of Christianity and the fall of the Roman Empire. Its physical bounds were suddenly enlarged. The discoveries of Copernicus revealed to man the secret of the universe. The daring of the Portuguese mariners doubled the Cape of Good Hope and anchored their merchant fleets in the harbours of India. Columbus crossed the untraversed ocean to add a New World to the Old. Sebastian Cabot, starting from the port of Bristol, threaded his way among the icebergs of Labrador. This sudden contact with new lands, new faiths, new races of men quickened the slumbering intelligence of Europe into a strange curiosity. The first book of voyages that told of the Western World, the travels of Amerigo Vespucci, were, at the time of More's Utopia, "in every body's hands." The Utopia itself, in its wide range of speculation on every subject of human thought and action, tells us how roughly and utterly the narrowness and limitation of the Middle Ages had been broken up. The capture of Constantinople by the Turks, and the flight of its Greek scholars to the shores of Italy, opened anew the science and literature of the older world at the very hour when the intellectual energy of the Middle Ages had sunk into exhaustion. Not a single book of any real value, save those of Sir John Fortescue and Philippe de Commines, was pro-

Digitized by Google

Sec. IV.

The New Learning.

1509-1520.

duced north of the Alps during the fifteenth century. In England, as we have seen, literature had reached its lowest ebb. It was at this moment that the exiled Greek scholars were welcomed in Italy, and that Florence, so long the home of freedom and of art, became the home of an intellectual Revival. The poetry of Homer, the drama of Sophocles, the philosophy of Aristotle and of Plato woke again to life beneath the shadow of the mighty dome with which Brunelleschi had just crowned the City by the Arno. All the restless energy which Florence had so long thrown into the cause of liberty she flung, now that her liberty was reft from her, into the cause of letters. The galleys of her merchants brought back manuscripts from the East as the most precious portion of their freight. In the palaces of her nobles fragments of classic sculpture ranged themselves beneath the frescoes of Ghirlandajo. The recovery of a treatise of Cicero or a tract of Sallust from the dust of a monastic library was welcomed by the group of statesmen and artists who gathered in the Rucellai gardens with a thrill of enthusiasm. Crowds of foreign scholars soon flocked over the Alps to learn Greek, the key of the new knowledge, from the Florentine teachers. Grocyn, a fellow of New College, was perhaps the first Englishman who studied under the Greek exile, Chalcondylas, and the Greek lectures which he delivered in Oxford on his return mark the opening of a new period in our history. Physical, as well as literary, activity awoke with the re-discovery of the teachers of Greece, and the continuous progress of English science may be dated from the day when Linacre, another Oxford student, returned from the lectures of the Florentine Politian to revive the older tradition of medicine by his translation of Galen. The awakening of a rational Christianity, whether in England or in the Teutonic world at large, begins with the Florentine studies of John Colet.

**Colet at Oxford.**

From the first it was manifest that the revival of letters would take a tone in England very different from the tone it had taken in Italy, a tone less literary, less largely human, but more moral, more religious, more practical in its bearings both upon society and politics. The vigour and earnestness of Colet were the best proof of the strength with which the new movement was to affect English religion. He came back from Florence to Oxford utterly untouched by the Platonic mysticism or the semi-serious infidelity which characterized the group of scholars round Lorenzo the Magnificent. He was hardly more influenced by their literary enthusiasm. The knowledge of Greek seems to have had one almost exclusive end for him, and this was a religious end. Greek was the key by which he could unlock the Gospels and the New Testament, and in these he thought that he could find a new religious standing-ground. It was this resolve of Colet to fling aside the traditional dogmas of his day and to discover a rational and practical religion in the Gospels themselves, which

Digitized by Google

gave its peculiar stamp to the theology of the Renascence. His faith stood simply on a vivid realization of the person of Christ. In the prominence which such a view gave to the moral life, in his free criticism of the earlier Scriptures, in his tendency to simple forms of doctrine and confessions of faith, Colet struck the key-note of a mode of religious thought as strongly in contrast with that of the later Reformation as with that of Catholicism itself. The allegorical and mystical theology on which the Middle Ages had spent their intellectual vigour to such little purpose fell at one blow before his rejection of all but the historical and grammatical sense of the Biblical text. The great fabric of belief built up by the mediæval doctors seemed to him simply "the corruptions of the Schoolmen." In the Life and Sayings of its Founder he found a simple and rational Christianity, whose fittest expression was the Apostles' creed. "About the rest," he said with characteristic impatience, "let divines dispute as they will." Of his attitude towards the coarser aspects of the current religion his behaviour at a later time before the famous shrine of St. Thomas at Canterbury gives us a rough indication. As the blaze of its jewels, its costly sculptures, its elaborate metal-work burst on Colet's view, he suggested with bitter irony that a saint so lavish to the poor in his lifetime would certainly prefer that they should possess the wealth heaped round him since his death, and rejected with petulant disgust the rags of the martyr which were offered for his adoration, and the shoe which was offered for his kiss. The earnestness, the religious zeal, the very impatience and want of sympathy with the past which we see in every word and act of the man, burst out in the lectures on St. Paul's Epistles which he delivered at Oxford. Even to the most critical among his hearers he seemed "like one inspired, raised in voice, eye, his whole countenance and mien, out of himself." 1499.
Severe as was the outer life of the new teacher, a severity marked by his plain black robe and the frugal table which he preserved amidst his later dignities, his lively conversation, his frank simplicity, the purity and nobleness of his life, even the keen outbursts of his troublesome temper, endeared him to a group of scholars among whom Erasmus and Thomas More stood in the foremost rank.

**Erasmus in England.**

"Greece has crossed the Alps," cried the exiled Argyropulos on hearing a translation of Thucydides by the German Reuchlin; but the glory, whether of Reuchlin or of the Teutonic scholars who followed him, was soon eclipsed by that of Erasmus. His enormous industry, the vast store of classical learning which he gradually accumulated, Erasmus shared with others of his day. In patristic reading he may have stood beneath Luther; in originality and profoundness of thought he was certainly inferior to More. His theology, though he made a far greater mark on the world by it than even by his scholarship, we have seen that he derived almost without change from Colet.

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.

THE NEW LEARNING.

1509-1520.

But his combination of vast learning with keen observation, of acuteness of remark with a lively fancy, of genial wit with a perfect good sense—his union of as sincere a piety and as profound a zeal for rational religion as Colet's with a dispassionate fairness towards older faiths, a large love of secular culture, and a genial freedom and play of mind—this union was his own, and it was through this that Erasmus embodied for the Teutonic peoples the quickening influence of the New Learning during the long scholar-life which began at Paris and ended amidst darkness and sorrow at Basle. At the time of Colet's return from Italy Erasmus was young and comparatively unknown, but the chivalrous enthusiasm of the new movement breaks out in his letters from Paris, whither he had wandered as a scholar. "I have given up my whole soul to Greek learning," he writes, "and as soon as I get any money I shall buy Greek books—and then I shall
1499. buy some clothes." It was in despair of reaching Italy that the young scholar made his way to Oxford, as the one place on this side the Alps where he would be enabled through the teaching of Grocyn to acquire a knowledge of Greek. But he had no sooner arrived there than all feeling of regret vanished away. "I have found in Oxford," he writes, "so much polish and learning that now I hardly care about going to Italy at all, save for the sake of having been there. When I listen to my friend Colet it seems like listening to Plato himself. Who does not wonder at the wide range of Grocyn's knowledge? What can be more searching, deep, and refined than the judgment of Linacre? When did Nature mould a temper more gentle, endearing, and happy than the temper of Thomas More?" But the new movement was already spreading beyond the bounds of Oxford. If, like every other living impulse, it shrank from the cold suspicion of the King, it found shelter under the patronage of his minister. Immersed as Archbishop Warham was in the business of the State, he was no mere politician. The eulogies which Erasmus lavished on him while he lived, his praises of the Primate's learning, of his ability in business, his pleasant humour, his modesty, his fidelity to friends, may pass for what eulogies of living men are commonly worth. But it is difficult to doubt the sincerity of the glowing picture which he drew of him when death had destroyed all interest in mere adulation. The letters indeed which passed between the great Churchman and the wandering scholar, the quiet, simple-hearted grace which amidst constant instances of munificence preserved the perfect equality of literary friendship, the enlightened piety to which Erasmus could address the noble words of his preface to St. Jerome, confirm the judgment of every good man of Warham's day. In the simplicity of his life the Archbishop offered a striking contrast to the greater prelates of his time. He cared nothing for the pomp, the sensual pleasures, the hunting and dicing in which they too commonly indulged. An hour's pleasant reading, a

Digitized by Google

quiet chat with some learned new-comer, alone broke the endless round of civil and ecclesiastical business. Few men realized so thoroughly as Warham the new conception of an intellectual and moral equality before which the old social distinctions of the world were to vanish away. His favourite relaxation was to sup among a group of scholarly visitors, enjoying their fun and retorting with fun of his own. But the scholar-world found more than supper or fun at the Primate's board. His purse was ever open to relieve their poverty. "Had I found such a patron in my youth," Erasmus wrote long after, "I too might have been counted among the fortunate ones." It was with Grocyn that Erasmus rowed up the river to Warham's board at Lambeth, and in spite of an unpromising beginning the acquaintance turned out wonderfully well. The Primate loved him, Erasmus wrote home, as if he were his father or his brother, and his generosity surpassed that of all his friends. He offered him a sinecure, and when he declined it he bestowed on him a pension of a hundred crowns a year. When Erasmus wandered to Paris it was Warham's invitation which recalled him to England. When the rest of his patrons left him to starve on the sour beer of Cambridge it was Warham who sent him fifty angels. "I wish they were thirty legions of them," the old man puns in his good-humoured way.

**Henry the Eighth.**

1509.

The hopes of the little group of scholars were held in check during the life of Henry the Seventh by his suspicion and ill will, but a "New Order," to use their own enthusiastic term, dawned on them with the accession of his son. Henry the Eighth had hardly completed his eighteenth year when he mounted the throne, but the beauty of his person, his vigour and skill in arms, seemed only matched by the generosity of his temper and the nobleness of his political aims. The abuses of the previous reign, the extortion of the Royal treasury, were at once remedied. Empson and Dudley, the ministers of his father's tyranny, were brought to the block, and the rights of the subject protected by a limitation of the time within which actions for recovery of its rights might be brought by the Crown. No accession ever excited higher expectations among a people than that of Henry the Eighth. Pole, his bitterest enemy, confessed at a later time, that the King was of a temper at the beginning of his reign "from which all excellent things might have been hoped." His sympathies were from the first openly on the side of the New Learning; for Henry was not only himself a fair scholar, but even in boyhood had roused by his wit and attainments the wonder of Erasmus. The great scholar hurried back to England to pour out his exultation in the "Praise of Folly," his song of triumph over the old world of ignorance and bigotry which was to vanish away before the light and knowledge of the new reign. Folly, in his amusing little book, mounts a pulpit in cap and bells and pelts with her satire the

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.
THE NEW LEARNING.
1509-1520.

absurdities of the world around her, the superstition of the monk, the pedantry of the grammarian, the dogmatism of the doctors of the schools, the cruelty of the sportsman. Gaily as it reads, the book was written in More's house to while away hours of sickness. The irony of Erasmus was backed by the earnestness of Colet. Four years before he had been called from Oxford to the Deanery of St. Paul's, and he now became the great preacher of his day, the predecessor of Latimer in his simplicity, his directness, and his force. But for the success of the new reform, a reform which could only be wrought out by the tranquil spread of knowledge and the gradual enlightenment of the human conscience, the one thing needful was peace; and the young King to whom the scholar-group looked was already longing for war. Long as peace had been established between the two countries, the designs of England upon the French crown had never been really abandoned. Edward the Fourth and Henry the Seventh had each threatened France with invasion, and only withdrawn on a humiliating payment of large sums by Lewis the Eleventh. But the policy of Lewis, his extinction of the great feudatories, and the administrative centralization which he was the first to introduce, raised his kingdom ere the close of his reign to a height far above that of its European rivals. The power of France, in fact, was only counterbalanced by that of Spain, which had become a great state through the union of Castile and Arragon, and where the prudence of Ferdinand was suddenly backed by the stroke of good fortune which added the New World to the dominion of Castile. Too weak to meet France single-handed, Henry the Seventh saw in an alliance with Spain, not merely a security against his 'hereditary enemy,' but an admirable starting point in case of any English attempt for the recovery of Guienne, and this alliance had been cemented by the marriage of his eldest son, Arthur, with Ferdinand's daughter, Catherine of Arragon. The match was broken by the death of the young bridegroom; but Henry the Eighth clung to his father's policy, and a Papal dispensation enabled Catherine to wed the brother of her late husband, the young sovereign himself. Throughout the first years of his reign, amidst the tournaments and revelry which seemed to absorb his whole energies, Henry was in fact keenly watching the opening which the ambition of France began to afford for a renewal of the old struggle. Under the successors of Lewis the Eleventh the efforts of the French monarchy had been directed to the conquest of Italy. Charles the Eighth, after entering Milan and Naples in triumph, had been driven back over the Alps, but Lewis the Twelfth had succeeded in establishing himself in Lombardy. A league of the Italian States was at last formed for his expulsion, with the Pope at its head, and to this league Spain and England gave their joint support. Of all the confederates, however, Henry alone reaped no profit from the war.

1510.

1512.

Digitized by Google

"The barbarians," to use the phrase of Julius the Second, "were chased beyond the Alps;" but Ferdinand's unscrupulous adroitness only used the English force, which had landed at Fontarabia with the view of recovering Guienne, to cover his own conquest of Navarre. The shame of this fruitless campaign roused in Henry a fiercer spirit of aggression; he landed in person in the north of France, and a sudden rout of the French cavalry in an engagement near Guinegate, which received from its bloodless character the name of the Battle of the Spurs, gave him the fortresses of Terouenne and Tournay. The young conqueror was eagerly pressing on from this new base of action to the recovery of his "heritage of France," when he found himself suddenly left alone by the desertion of Ferdinand and the dissolution of the league. The millions left by his father were exhausted, his subjects had been drained by repeated subsidies, and, furious as he was at the treachery of his allies, Henry was driven to conclude an inglorious peace. 1513.

**The Peace and the New Learning.**

To the hopes of the New Learning this sudden outbreak of the spirit of war, this change of the monarch from whom they had looked for a "new order" into a vulgar conqueror, proved a bitter disappointment. Colet thundered from the pulpit of St.Paul's, that "an unjust peace is better than the justest war," and protested that "when men out of hatred and ambition fight with and destroy one another, they fight under the banner, not of Christ, but of the Devil." Erasmus quitted Cambridge with a bitter satire against the "madness" around him. "It is the people," he said, in words which must have startled his age,—"it is the people who build cities, while the madness of princes destroys them." The sovereigns of his time appeared to him like ravenous birds pouncing with beak and claw on the hard-won wealth and knowledge of mankind. "Kings who are scarcely men," he exclaimed in bitter irony, "are called 'divine;' they are 'invincible' though they fly from every battle-field; 'serene' though they turn the world upside down in a storm of war; 'illustrious' though they grovel in ignorance of all that is noble; 'Catholic' though they follow anything rather than Christ. Of all birds the Eagle alone has seemed to wise men the type of royalty, a bird neither beautiful, nor musical, nor good for food, but murderous, greedy, hateful to all, the curse of all, and with its great powers of doing harm only surpassed by its desire to do it." It was the first time in modern history that religion had formally dissociated itself from the ambition of princes and the horrors of war, or that the new spirit of criticism had ventured not only to question but to deny what had till then seemed the primary truths of political order. We shall soon see to what further length the new speculations were pushed by a greater thinker, but for the moment the indignation of the New Learning was diverted to more practical ends by the sudden peace. The silent

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.

THE NEW LEARNING. 1509-1520.

influences of time were working, indeed, steadily for its cause. The printing press was making letters the common property of all. In the last thirty years of the fifteenth century ten thousand editions of books and pamphlets are said to have been published throughout Europe, the most important half of them of course in Italy; and all the Latin authors were accessible to every student before it closed. Almost all the more valuable authors of Greece were published in the first twenty years of the century which followed. At the moment, therefore, of the Peace the profound influence of this burst of the two great classic literatures upon the world was just making itself felt. "For the first time," to use the picturesque phrase of M. Taine, "men opened their eyes and saw." The human mind seemed to gather new energies at the sight of the vast field which opened before it. It attacked every province of knowledge, and in a few years it transformed all. Experimental science, the science of philology, the science of politics, the critical investigation of religious truth, all took their origin from this Renascence—this 'New Birth' of the world. Art, if it lost much in purity and propriety, gained in scope and in the fearlessness of its love of Nature. Literature, if crushed for the moment by the overpowering attraction of the great models of Greece and Rome, revived with a grandeur of form, a large spirit of humanity, such as it had never known since their day. In England, the influence of the new movement extended far beyond the little group in which it had a few years before seemed concentrated. The great Churchmen still remained its patrons. Langton, Bishop of Worcester, took delight in examining the young scholars of his episcopal family every evening, and sent all the most promising of them to study across the Alps. Archbishop Warham, in a similar spirit, sent Croke for education to Leipsic and Louvain. Cuthbert Tunstall, and Hugh Latimer, men destined to strangely different fortunes, went to study together at Padua. Henry himself, bitterly as he had disappointed its hopes, remained the steady friend of the New Learning. Through all the strange changes of his terrible career the King's Court was the home of letters. Even as a boy his son, Edward the Sixth, was a fair scholar in both the classical languages. His daughter Mary wrote good Latin letters. Elizabeth, who spoke French and Italian as fluently as English, began every day with an hour's reading in the Greek Testament, the tragedies of Sophocles, or the orations of Isocrates and Demosthenes. Widely as Henry's ministers differed from one another, they all agreed in sharing and protecting the culture around them.

**The New Learning and Education.**

The war therefore was hardly over, when the New Learning entered on its work of reform with an energy which contrasted strangely with its recent tone of despair. The election of Leo the Tenth, the fellow-student of Linacre, the friend of Erasmus, seemed to give it the control of Christendom. The age of the turbulent, ambitious Julius was

Digitized by Google

thought to be over, and the new Pope declared formally for a universal peace. "Leo," wrote an English agent at his Court, in words to which after-history lent a strange meaning, "would favour literature and the arts, busy himself in building, and enter into no war save through actual compulsion." England, under the new ministry of Wolsey, withdrew from any active interference in the struggles of the Continent, and seemed as resolute as Leo himself for peace. Colet seized the opportunity to commence the work of educational reform by the foundation of his own Grammar School, beside St. Paul's. The bent of its founder's mind was shown by the image of the Child Jesus which stood over its gate, with the words "Hear ye Him" graven beneath it. "Lift up your little white hands for me," wrote the Dean to his scholars, in words which show the tenderness that lay beneath the stern outer seeming of the man,—"for me which prayeth for you to God." All the educational designs of the reformers were carried out in the new foundation. The old methods of instruction were superseded by fresh grammars composed by Erasmus and other scholars for its use. Lilly, an Oxford student who had studied Greek in the East, was placed at its head. The injunctions of the founder aimed at the union of rational religion with sound learning, at the exclusion of the scholastic logic, and at the steady diffusion of the two classical literatures. The more bigoted of the clergy were quick to take alarm. "No wonder," More wrote to the Dean, "your school raises a storm, for it is like the wooden horse in which armed Greeks were hidden for the ruin of barbarous Troy." But the cry of alarm passed helplessly away. Not only did the study of Greek creep gradually into the schools which existed, but the example of Colet was followed by a crowd of imitators. More grammar schools, it has been said, were founded in the latter years of Henry than in the three centuries before. The impulse grew happily stronger as the direct influence of the New Learning passed away. The grammar schools of Edward the Sixth and of Elizabeth, in a word the system of middle-class education which by the close of the century had changed the very face of England, were the direct results of Colet's foundation of St. Paul's. But the "armed Greeks" of More's apologue found a yet wider field in the reform of the higher education of the country. On the Universities the influence of the New Learning was like a passing from death to life. Erasmus gives us a picture of what happened at Cambridge, where he was himself for a time a teacher of Greek. "Scarcely thirty years ago nothing was taught here but the *Parva Logicalia* of Alexander, antiquated exercises from Aristotle, and the *Quæstiones* of Scotus. As time went on better studies were added, mathematics, a new, or at any rate a renovated, Aristotle, and a knowledge of Greek literature. What has been the result? The University is now so flourishing that it can compete with the best

1513.

1516.



Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.
THE NEW LEARNING.
1509-1520.

universities of the age." Latimer and Croke returned from Italy and carried on the work of Erasmus at Cambridge, where Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, himself one of the foremost scholars of the new movement, lent it his powerful support. At Oxford the Revival met with a fiercer opposition. The contest took the form of boyish frays, in which the young partisans and opponents of the New Learning took sides as Greeks and Trojans. The King himself had to summon one of its fiercest enemies to Woodstock, and to impose silence on the tirades which were delivered from the University pulpit. The preacher alleged that he was carried away by the Spirit. "Yes," retorted the King, "by the spirit, not of wisdom, but of folly." But even at Oxford the contest was soon at an end. Fox, Bishop of Winchester, established the first Greek lecture there in his new college of Corpus Christi, and a Professorship of Greek was at a later time established by the Crown. "The students," wrote an eye-witness, "rush to Greek letters, they endure watching, fasting, toil, and hunger in the pursuit of them." The work was crowned at last by the munificent foundation of Cardinal College, to share in whose teaching Wolsey invited the most eminent of the living scholars of Europe, and for whose library he promised to obtain copies of all the manuscripts in the Vatican.

1520.

**The New Learning and the Church.**

As Colet had been the first to attempt the reform of English education, so he was the first to undertake the reform of the Church. Warham still flung around the movement his steady protection, and it was by his commission that Colet was enabled to address the Convocation of the Clergy in words which set before them with unsparing severity the religious ideal of the New Learning. "Would that for once," burst forth the fiery preacher, "you would remember your name and profession and take thought for the reformation of the Church! Never was it more necessary, and never did the state of the Church need more vigorous endeavours." "We are troubled with heretics," he went on, "but no heresy of theirs is so fatal to us and to the people at large as the vicious and depraved lives of the clergy. That is the worst heresy of all." It was the reform of the bishops that must precede that of the clergy, the reform of the clergy that would lead to a general revival of religion in the people at large. The accumulation of benefices, the luxury and worldliness of the priesthood, must be abandoned. The prelates ought to be busy preachers, to forsake the Court and labour in their own dioceses. Care should be taken for the ordination and promotion of worthier ministers, residence should be enforced, the low standard of clerical morality should be raised. It is plain that Colet looked forward, not to a reform of doctrine, but to a reform of life, not to a revolution which should sweep away the older superstitions which he despised, but to a regeneration of spiritual feeling before which they

Digitized by Google

would inevitably vanish. He was at once charged, however, with heresy, but Warham repelled the charge with disdain. Henry himself, to whom Colet had been denounced, bade him go boldly on. "Let every man have his own doctor," said the young King, after a long interview, "and let every man favour his own, but this man is the doctor for me." Still more marked than Warham's protection of Colet was the patronage which the Primate extended to the efforts of Erasmus. His edition of the works of St. Jerome had been begun under Warham's encouragement during the great scholar's residence at Cambridge, and it appeared with a dedication to the Archbishop on its title-page. That Erasmus could find protection in Warham's name for a work which boldly recalled Christendom to the path of sound Biblical criticism, that he could address him in words so outspoken as those of his preface, shows how fully the Primate sympathized with the highest efforts of the New Learning. Nowhere had the spirit of inquiry so firmly set itself against the claims of authority. "Synods and decrees, and even councils," wrote Erasmus, "are by no means in my judgment the fittest modes of repressing error, unless truth depend simply on authority. But on the contrary, the more dogmas there are, the more fruitful is the ground in producing heresies. Never was the Christian faith purer or more undefiled than when the world was content with a single creed, and that the shortest creed we have." It is touching even now to listen to such an appeal of reason and of culture against the tide of dogmatism which was soon to flood Christendom with Augsburg Confessions, and Creeds of Pope Pius, and Westminster Catechisms, and Thirty-nine Articles. The principles which Erasmus urged in his "Jerome," were urged with far greater clearness and force in a work which laid the foundations of the future Reformation, the edition of the Greek Testament on which he had been engaged at Cambridge, and whose production was almost wholly due to the encouragement and assistance he received from English scholars. In itself the book was a bold defiance of theological tradition. It set aside the Latin version of the Vulgate, which had secured universal acceptance in the Church. Its method of interpretation was based, not on received dogmas, but on the literal meaning of the text. Its real end was the end at which Colet had aimed in his Oxford lectures. Erasmus desired to set Christ himself in the place of the Church, to recall men from the teachings of Christian theologians to the teachings of the Founder of Christianity. The whole value of the Gospels to him lay in the vividness with which they brought home to their readers the personal impression of Christ himself. "Were we to have seen him with our own eyes, we should not have so intimate a knowledge as they give us of Christ, speaking, healing, dying, rising again, as it were, in our very presence." All the superstitions of mediæval worship faded away in the light of this personal worship of



Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.

THE NEW LEARNING. 1509-1520.

Christ. "If the footprints of Christ are shown us in any place, we kneel down and adore them. Why do we not rather venerate the living and breathing picture of him in these books? We deck statues of wood and stone with gold and gems for the love of Christ. Yet they only profess to represent to us the outer form of his body, while these books present us with a living picture of his holy mind." In the same way the actual teaching of Christ was made to supersede the mysterious dogmas of the older ecclesiastical teaching. "As though Christ taught such subtleties," burst out Erasmus: "subtleties that can scarcely be understood even by a few theologians—or as though the strength of the Christian religion consisted in man's ignorance of it! It may be the safer course," he goes on, with characteristic irony, "to conceal the state-mysteries of kings, but Christ desired his mysteries to be spread abroad as openly as was possible." In the diffusion, in the universal knowledge of the teaching of Christ the foundation of a reformed Christianity had still, he urged, to be laid. With the tacit approval of the Primate of a Church which from the time of Wyclif had held the translation and reading of the Bible in the common tongue to be heresy and a crime punishable with the fire, Erasmus boldly avows his wish for a Bible open and intelligible to all. "I wish that even the weakest woman might read the Gospels and the Epistles of St. Paul. I wish that they were translated into all languages, so as to be read and understood not only by Scots and Irishmen, but even by Saracens and Turks. But the first step to their being read is to make them intelligible to the reader. I long for the day when the husbandman shall sing portions of them to himself as he follows the plough, when the weaver shall hum them to the time of his shuttle, when the traveller shall while away with their stories the weariness of his journey." The New Testament of Erasmus became the topic of the day; the Court, the Universities, every household to which the New Learning had penetrated, read and discussed it. But bold as its language may have seemed, Warham not only expressed his approbation, but lent the work—as he wrote to its author—"to bishop after bishop." The most influential of his suffragans, Bishop Fox of Winchester, declared that the mere version was worth ten commentaries: the most learned, Fisher of Rochester, entertained Erasmus at his house.

Thomas More.

Daring and full of promise as were these efforts of the New Learning in the direction of educational and religious reform, its political and social speculations took a far wider range in the "Utopia" of Thomas More. Even in the household of Cardinal Morton, where he had spent his childhood, More's precocious ability had raised the highest hopes. "Whoever may live to see it," the grey-haired statesman used to say, "this boy now waiting at table will turn out a marvellous man." We have seen the spell which his wonderful learning and the sweetness of his temper threw at Oxford over Colet and Erasmus; and,

Digitized by Google

young as he was, More no sooner quitted the University than he was known throughout Europe as one of the foremost figures in the new movement. The keen, irregular face, the grey restless eye, the thin mobile lips, the tumbled brown hair, the careless gait and dress, as they remain stamped on the canvas of Holbein, picture the inner soul of the man, his vivacity, his restless, all-devouring intellect, his keen and even reckless wit, the kindly, half-sad humour that drew its strange veil of laughter and tears over the deep, tender reverence of the soul within. In a higher, because in a sweeter and more loveable form than Colet, More is the representative of the religious tendency of the New Learning in England. The young law-student who laughed at the superstition and asceticism of the monks of his day wore a hair shirt next his skin, and schooled himself by penances for the cell he desired among the Carthusians. It was characteristic of the man that among all the gay, profligate scholars of the Italian Renascence he chose as the object of his admiration the disciple of Savonarola, Pico di Mirandola. Free-thinker as the bigots who listened to his daring speculations termed him, his eye would brighten and his tongue falter as he spoke with friends of heaven and the after-life. When he took office, it was with the open stipulation "first to look to God, and after God to the King." But in his outer bearing there was nothing of the monk or recluse. The brightness and freedom of the New Learning seemed incarnate in the young scholar, with his gay talk, his winsomeness of manner, his reckless epigrams, his passionate love of music, his omnivorous reading, his paradoxical speculations, his gibes at monks, his schoolboy fervour of liberty. But events were soon to prove that beneath this sunny nature lay a stern inflexibility of conscientious resolve. The Florentine scholars who penned declamations against tyrants had covered with their flatteries the tyranny of the house of Medici. More no sooner entered Parliament than his ready argument and keen sense of justice led to the rejection of the Royal demand for a heavy subsidy. "A beardless boy," said the courtiers,—and More was only twenty-three,—"has disappointed the King's purpose;" and during the rest of Henry the Seventh's reign the young lawyer was forced to withdraw from public life. But the withdrawal had little effect on his buoyant activity. He rose at once into repute at the bar. He published his "Life of Edward the Fifth," the first work in which what we may call modern English prose appears written with purity and clearness of style and a freedom either from antiquated forms of expression or classical pedantry. His ascetic dreams were replaced by the affections of home. It is when we get a glimpse of him in his house at Chelsea that we understand the endearing epithets which Erasmus always lavishes upon More. The delight of the young husband was to train the girl he had chosen for his wife in his own taste for letters and

1514.

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.
THE NEW LEARNING.
1509-1520.

for music. The reserve which the age exacted from parents was thrown to the winds in More's intercourse with his children. He loved teaching them, and lured them to their deeper studies by the coins and curiosities he had gathered in his cabinet. He was as fond of their pets and their games as his children themselves, and would take grave scholars and statesmen into the garden to see his girls' rabbit-hutches or to watch the gambols of their favourite monkey. "I have given you kisses enough," he wrote to his little ones, in merry verse, when far away on political business, "but stripes hardly ever." The accession of Henry the Eighth dragged him back into the political current. It was at his house that Erasmus penned the "Praise of Folly," and the work, in its Latin title, "Moriæ Encomium," embodied in playful fun his love of the extravagant humour of More. More "tried as hard to keep out of Court," says his descendant, "as most men try to get into it." When the charm of his conversation gave so much pleasure to the young sovereign "that he could not once in a month get leave to go home to his wife or children, whose company he much desired, . . . he began thereupon to dissemble his nature, and so, little by little, from his former mirth to dissemble himself." More shared to the full the disappointment of his friends at the sudden outbreak of Henry's warlike temper, but the Peace again drew him to the Court, he entered the Royal service, and was soon in the King's confidence both as a counsellor and as a diplomatist.

**The Utopia.**

It was on one of his diplomatic missions that More describes himself as hearing news of the Kingdom of "Nowhere." "On a certain day when I had heard mass in Our Lady's Church, which is the fairest, the most gorgeous and curious church of building in all the city of Antwerp, and also most frequented of people, and service being over I was ready to go home to my lodgings, I chanced to espy my friend Peter Gilles talking with a certain stranger, a man well stricken in age, with a black sun-burnt face, a large beard, and a cloke cast trimly about his shoulders, whom by his favour and apparell forthwith I judged to be a mariner." The sailor turned out to have been a companion of Amerigo Vespucci in those voyages to the New World "that be now in print and abroad in every man's hand," and on More's invitation he accompanied him to his house, and "there in my garden upon a bench covered with green turves we sate down, talking together" of the man's marvellous adventures, his desertion in America by Vespucci, his wanderings over the country under the equinoctial line, and at last of his stay in the Kingdom of "Nowhere." It was the story of "Nowhere," or Utopia, which More embodied in the wonderful book which reveals to us the heart of the New Learning. As yet the movement had been one of scholars and divines. Its plans of reform had been almost exclusively intellectual and religious. But in

Digitized by Google

More the same free play of thought which had shaken off the old forms of education and faith turned to question the old forms of society and politics. From a world where fifteen hundred years of Christian teaching had produced social injustice, religious intolerance, and political tyranny, the humorist philosopher turned to a "Nowhere," in which the mere efforts of natural human virtue realized those ends of security, equality, brotherhood, and freedom for which the very institution of society seemed to have been framed. It is as he wanders through this dreamland of the new reason that More touches the great problems which were fast opening before the modern world, problems of labour, of crime, of conscience, of government. Merely to have seen and to have examined questions such as these would prove the keenness of his intellect, but its far-reaching originality is shown in the solutions which he proposes. Amidst much that is the pure play of an exuberant fancy, much that is mere recollection of the dreams of bygone dreamers, we find again and again the most important social and political discoveries of later times anticipated by the genius of Thomas More. In some points, such as his treatment of the question of Labour, he still remains far in advance of current opinion. The whole system of society around him seemed to him "nothing but a conspiracy of the rich against the poor." Its economic legislation was simply the carrying out of such a conspiracy by process of law. "The rich are ever striving to pare away something further from the daily wages of the poor by private fraud and even by public law, so that the wrong already existing (for it is a wrong that those from whom the State derives most benefit should receive least reward) is made yet greater by means of the law of the State." "The rich devise every means by which they may in the first place secure to themselves what they have amassed by wrong, and then take to their own use and profit at the lowest possible price the work and labour of the poor. And so soon as the rich decide on adopting these devices in the name of the public, then they become law." The result was the wretched existence to which the labour-class was doomed, "a life so wretched that even a beast's life seems enviable." No such cry of pity for the poor, of protest against the system of agrarian and manufacturing tyranny which found its expression in the Statutes of Labourers, had been heard since the days of Piers Ploughman. But from Christendom More turns with a smile to "Nowhere." In "Nowhere" the aim of legislation is to secure the welfare, social, industrial, intellectual, religious, of the community at large, and of the labour-class as the true basis of a well-ordered commonwealth. The end of its labour-laws was simply the welfare of the labourer. Goods were possessed indeed in common, but labour was compulsory with all. The period of toil was shortened to the nine hours demanded by modern artisans, with a view to the intellectual improvement of the worker.

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.
THE NEW LEARNING.
1509-1520.

"In the institution of the weal public this end is only and chiefly pretended and minded that what time may possibly be spared from the necessary occupations and affairs of the commonwealth, all that the citizens should withdraw from bodily service, to the free liberty of the mind and garnishing of the same. For herein they conceive the felicity of this life to consist." A public system of education enabled the Utopians to avail themselves of their leisure. While in England half of the population "could read no English," every child was well taught in "Nowhere." The physical aspects of society were cared for as attentively as its moral. The houses of Utopia "in the beginning were very low and like homely cottages or poor shepherd huts made at all adventures of every rude piece of timber that came first to hand, with mud walls, and ridged roofs thatched over with straw." The picture was really that of the common English town of More's day, the home of squalor and pestilence. In Utopia, however, they had at last come to realize the connection between public morality and the health which springs from light, air, comfort, and cleanliness. "The streets were twenty feet broad; the houses backed by spacious gardens, and, curiously builded after a gorgeous and gallant sort, with their stories one after another. The outsides of the walls be made either of hard flint, or of plaster, or else of brick; and the inner sides be well strengthened by timber work. The roofs be plain and flat, covered over with plaster so tempered that no fire can hurt or perish it, and withstanding the violence of the weather better than any lead. They keep the wind out of their windows with glass, for it is there much used, and sometimes also with fine linen cloth dipped in oil or amber, and that for two commodities, for by this means more light cometh in and the wind is better kept out."

The same foresight which appears in More's treatment of the questions of Labour and the Public Health is yet more apparent in his treatment of the question of Crime. He was the first to suggest that punishment was less effective in suppressing it than prevention. "If you allow your people to be badly taught, their morals to be corrupted from childhood, and then when they are men punish them for the very crimes to which they have been trained in childhood—what is this but first to make thieves, and then to punish them?" He was the first to plead for proportion between the punishment and the crime, and to point out the folly of the cruel penalties of his day. "Simple theft is not so great an offence as to be punished with death." If a thief and a murderer are sure of the same penalty, he points out that the law is simply tempting the thief to secure his theft by murder. "While we go about to make thieves afraid, we are really provoking them to kill good men." The end of all punishment he declares to be reformation, "nothing else but the destruction of vice and the saving of men."

Digitized by Google

He advises "so using and ordering criminals that they cannot choose but be good; and what harm soever they did before, the residue of their lives to make amends for the same." Above all, he urges that to be remedial punishment must be wrought out by labour and hope, so that "none is hopeless or in despair to recover again his former state of freedom by giving good tokens and likelihood of himself that he will ever after that live a true and honest man." It is not too much to say that in the great principles More lays down he anticipated every one of the improvements in our criminal system which have distinguished the last hundred years. His treatment of the religious question was even more in advance of his age. If the houses of Utopia were strangely in contrast with the halls of England, where the bones from every dinner lay rotting in the dirty straw which strewed the floor, where the smoke curled about the rafters, and the wind whistled through the unglazed windows; if its penal legislation had little likeness to the gallows which stood out so frequently against our English sky; the religion of "Nowhere" was in yet stronger conflict with the faith of Christendom. It rested simply on nature and reason. It held that God's design was the happiness of man, and that the ascetic rejection of human delights, save for the common good, was thanklessness to the Giver. Christianity, indeed, had already reached Utopia, but it had few priests; religion found its centre rather in the family than in the congregation: and each household confessed its faults to its own natural head. A yet stranger characteristic was seen in the peaceable way in which it lived side by side with the older religions. More than a century before William of Orange, More discerned and proclaimed the great principle of religious toleration. In "Nowhere" it was lawful to every man to be of what religion he would. Even the disbelievers in a Divine Being or in the immortality of man, who by a single exception to its perfect religious indifference were excluded from public office, were excluded, not on the ground of their religious belief, but because their opinions were believed to be degrading to mankind, and therefore to incapacitate those who held them from governing in a noble temper. But even these were subject to no punishment, because the people of Utopia were "persuaded that it is not in a man's power to believe what he list." The religion which a man held he might propagate by argument, though not by violence or insult to the religion of others. But while each sect performed its rites in private, all assembled for public worship in a spacious temple, where the vast throng, clad in white, and grouped round a priest clothed in fair raiment wrought marvellously out of birds' plumage, joined in hymns and prayers so framed as to be acceptable to all. The importance of this public devotion lay in the evidence it afforded that liberty of conscience could be combined with religious unity.

Digitized by Google

SEC. V.
WOLSEY.
1515–1531.

## Section V.—Wolsey. 1515–1531.

[*Authorities.*—The chronicler Hall, who wrote under Edward the Sixth, has been copied for Henry the Eighth's reign by Grafton, and followed by Holinshed. But for any real knowledge of Wolsey's administration we must turn to the invaluable prefaces which Professor Brewer has prefixed to the Calendars of State Papers for this period, and to the State Papers themselves.]

**The New Learning and the Reformation.**

"There are many things in the commonwealth of Nowhere, which I rather wish than hope to see adopted in our own." It was with these words of characteristic irony that More closed the great work which embodied the dreams of the New Learning. Destined as they were to fulfilment in the course of ages, its schemes of social, religious, and political reform broke helplessly against the temper of the time. At the very moment when More was pleading the cause of justice between rich and poor, the agrarian discontent was being fanned by exactions into a fiercer flame. While he aimed sarcasm after sarcasm against King-worship, despotism was being organized into a system. His advocacy of the two principles of religious toleration and Christian comprehension coincides almost to a year with the opening of the strife between the Reformation and the Papacy.

1517. "That Luther has a fine genius," laughed Leo the Tenth, when he heard that a German Professor had nailed some Propositions denouncing the abuse of Indulgences, or of the Papal power to remit certain penalties attached to the commission of sins, against the doors of the church at Wittenberg. But the "Quarrell of Friars," as the controversy was termed contemptuously at Rome, soon took larger

1518. proportions. If at the outset Luther flung himself "prostrate at the feet" of the Papacy, and owned its voice as the voice of Christ, the formal sentence of Leo no sooner confirmed the doctrine of Indulgences than their opponent appealed to a future Council of the Church. Two years later the rupture was complete. A Papal Bull formally

1520. condemned the errors of the Reformer. The condemnation was met with defiance, and Luther publicly consigned the Bull to the flames. A second condemnation expelled him from the bosom of the Church, and the ban of the Empire was soon added to that of the Papacy. "Here stand I; I can none other," Luther replied to the young Emperor, Charles the Fifth, as he pressed him to recant in the Diet of Worms; and from the hiding-place in the Thuringian Forest where he was sheltered by the Elector of Saxony he denounced not merely, as at first, the abuses of the Papacy, but the Papacy itself.

1521. The heresies of Wyclif were revived; the infallibility, the authority of the Roman See, the truth of its doctrines, the efficacy of its worship, were denied and scoffed at in the vigorous pamphlets which issued

Digitized by Google

from his retreat, and were dispersed throughout the world by the new printing-press. The old resentment of Germany against the oppression of Rome, the moral revolt in its more religious minds against the secularity and corruption of the Church, the disgust of the New Learning at its superstition and ignorance, combined to secure for Luther a wide-spread popularity and the protection of the northern princes of the Empire. In England however his protest found as yet no echo: its only effect indeed was to rouse again the old spirit of persecution. Luther's works were solemnly burnt in St. Paul's, heretical publications were ordered to be delivered up, and fresh orders were issued for the prosecution of heretics in the Bishops' Courts. The young King himself, proud of a theological knowledge in which he stood alone among the sovereigns of Europe, entered the lists against Luther with an "Assertion of the Seven Sacraments," for which he was rewarded by Leo with the title of "Defender of the Faith." The insolent abuse of the Reformer's answer called More and Fisher into the field. As yet the New Learning, though scared by Luther's intemperate language, had steadily backed him in his struggle. Erasmus pleaded for him with the Emperor; Ulrich von Hutten attacked the friars in satires and invectives as violent as his own. But the temper of the Revival was even more antagonistic to the temper of Luther than that of Rome itself. From the golden dream of a new age, wrought peaceably and purely by the slow progress of intelligence, the growth of letters, the development of human virtue, the Reformer of Wittenburg turned away with horror. He had little or no sympathy with the new culture. He despised reason as heartily as any Papal dogmatist could despise it. He hated the very thought of toleration or comprehension. He had been driven by a moral and intellectual compulsion to declare the Roman system a false one, but it was only to replace it by another system of doctrine just as elaborate, and claiming precisely the same infallibility. To degrade human nature was to attack the very base of the New Learning; but Erasmus no sooner advanced to its defence than Luther declared man to be utterly enslaved by original sin and incapable through any efforts of his own of discovering truth or of arriving at goodness. Such a doctrine not only annihilated the piety and wisdom of the classic past, from which the New Learning had drawn its larger views of life and of the world; it trampled in the dust reason itself, the very instrument by which More and Erasmus hoped to regenerate both knowledge and religion. To More especially, with his keener perception of its future effect, this sudden revival of a purely theological and dogmatic spirit, severing Christendom into warring camps, and annihilating all hopes of union and tolerance, was especially hateful. The temper which hitherto had seemed so "endearing, gentle, and happy," suddenly gave way. His reply to

1521.

Digitized by Google

SEC. V. WOLSEY. 1515-1531.

Luther's attack upon the King sank to the level of the work it answered. That of Fisher was calmer and more argumentative; but the divorce of the New Learning from the Reformation was complete.

**Wolsey.**

Nor were the political hopes of the "Utopia" destined to be realized by the minister who at the close of Henry's early war with France mounted rapidly into power. Thomas Wolsey, the son of a wealthy townsman of Ipswich, who had risen to the post of Royal Chaplain, was taken by Bishop Fox, at the death of Henry the Seventh, into the political service of the crown. His extraordinary abilities hardly perhaps required the songs, dances, and carouses with his indulgence in which he was taunted by his enemies, to aid him in winning the favour of the young sovereign. From the post of favourite he soon rose to that of minister. Henry's resentment at Ferdinand's perfidy and at the ridiculous results of the vast efforts and expense of the war against France broke the Spanish alliance to which his father and the ministers whom his father had left him so steadily clung. The retirement of Fox made way for Wolsey, and the policy of the new statesman reversed that of his predecessors. It was the friendship of England which encouraged Francis the First to attempt the reconquest of Lombardy, and even his victory of Marignano failed to rouse a jealousy of French aggression, though by treaties and subsidies to its opponents Wolsey managed to limit the conquests of France to the Milanese. A French alliance meant simply a policy of peace, and the administration of Wolsey amidst all its ceaseless diplomacy aimed steadily at keeping England out of war. The Peace, as we have seen, restored the hopes of the New Learning; it enabled Colet to reform education, Erasmus to undertake the regeneration of the Church, More to set on foot a new science of Politics. But peace as Wolsey used it was fatal to English freedom. In the political hints which lie scattered over the "Utopia" More notes with bitter irony the advance of the new despotism. It was only in "Nowhere" that a sovereign was "removable on suspicion of a design to enslave his people." In England the work of slavery was being quietly wrought, hints the great lawyer, through the law. "There will never be wanting some pretence for deciding in the King's favour; as, that equity is on his side, or the strict letter of the law, or some forced interpretation of it; or if none of these, that the Royal prerogative ought with conscientious judges to outweigh all other considerations." We are startled at the precision with which More maps out the expedients by which the law courts were to lend themselves to the advance of tyranny till their crowning judgment in the case of Ship-money. But behind these judicial expedients lay great principles of absolutism, which partly from the example of foreign monarchies, partly from the sense of social and political

1515.

Digitized by Google

insecurity, and yet more from the isolated position of the Crown, were gradually winning their way in public opinion. "These notions," he goes boldly on, "are fostered by the maxim that the King can do no wrong, however much he may wish to do it; that not only the property but the persons of his subjects are his own; and that a man has a right to no more than the King's goodness thinks fit not to take from him." In the hands of Wolsey these maxims were transformed into principles of State. The check which had been imposed on the Royal power by the presence of great prelates and nobles at the Council was practically removed. All authority was concentrated in the hands of a single minister. The whole direction of home and foreign affairs rested with Wolsey alone; as Chancellor he stood at the head of public justice; his elevation to the office of Legate rendered him supreme in the Church. Enormous as was the mass of work which he undertook, it was thoroughly done: his administration of the Royal treasury was economical; the number of his despatches is hardly less remarkable than the care bestowed upon each; as Chancellor even More —his avowed enemy—confesses that he surpassed all men's expectation. The Court of Chancery, indeed, became so crowded with business through the character for expedition and justice which it acquired under his rule, that subordinate courts—one of which, that of the Master of the Rolls, still remains—had to be created for its relief. It was this vast concentration of all secular and ecclesiastical power in a single hand which accustomed England to the personal government which began with Henry the Eighth; and it was, above all, Wolsey's long tenure of the whole Papal authority within the realm, and the consequent suspension of appeals to Rome, that led men to acquiesce at a later time in Henry's religious supremacy. For great as was Wolsey's pride, he regarded himself and proclaimed himself simply as the creature of the King. Henry had munificently rewarded his services to the crown. He had been raised to the See of Lincoln and the Archbishopric of York, the revenues of two other Sees whose tenants were foreigners were in his hands, he was Bishop of Winchester and Abbot of St. Albans, he was in receipt of pensions from France and Spain, while his official emoluments were enormous. His ambition was glutted at last with the rank of Cardinal. His pomp was almost royal. A train of prelates and nobles followed him wherever he moved; his household was composed of five hundred persons of noble birth, and its chief posts were held by knights and barons of the realm. He spent his vast wealth with princely ostentation. Two of his houses, Hampton Court and York House (under its name of Whitehall), were splendid enough to serve at his fall for Royal palaces. His school at Ipswich was eclipsed by the glories of his foundation at Oxford, whose name of Cardinal College has been lost in its later title of Christ-church. But all this mass of power and wealth Wolsey held, and owned that

Digitized by Google

SEC. V. WOLSEY. 1515–1531.

he held, simply at the Royal will. In raising his favourite to the head of Church and of State Henry was simply gathering all religious as well as all civil authority into his personal grasp. The nation which trembled before Wolsey learned to tremble before the King who could destroy Wolsey by a breath.

**Wolsey and the Parliament.**

That Henry's will was supreme in the State was proved by his rough repudiation, after nine years of peace, of the policy on which all the Cardinal's plans of administration were based. The Spanish cause was popular among the English nobility, and it was resolutely advocated by the Duke of Buckingham, who stood at their head. Wolsey met the Duke's opposition with a charge of treason, to which the fact of his descent from Edward the Third gave a fatal weight. Buckingham had sworn that in the event of Henry's ceasing to live he would bring the Cardinal's head to the block, and the boast was tortured into the crime of imagining the King's death. The peers were forced to doom the chief of their order to a traitor's punishment; but the Queen, Catherine of Arragon, still upheld the partisans of Spain, and Henry was himself weary of a policy of peace. Disappointed in his hopes of attaining the Imperial crown on the death of Maximilian, he ceased to believe Wolsey's flattering assurances that in the balanced contest between Spain and France he was the arbiter of Europe; while the dream of "recovering his French inheritance," which he had never really abandoned, was carefully fed by his nephew Charles, who had inherited Flanders as heir to the Dukes of Burgundy, Austria as heir to Maximilian, and Castile as the son of Juana, had mounted the throne of Arragon on the death of his grandfather, Ferdinand, and by his election as Emperor had become in his earliest manhood the mightiest power in Christendom. It was in vain that Francis strove to retain Henry's friendship by an interview near Guisnes, to which the profuse expenditure of both monarchs gave the name of the Field of Cloth of Gold; in vain that Wolsey endeavoured to avert the struggle by conferences, and to delay the visit of Charles to England. The meeting of the Emperor with Henry at Southampton gave the signal for a renewal of the war. Henry was fascinated by the persuasions and promises of his young nephew, and the French alliance came to an end. In the first result of the new war policy at home we can see the reason for Wolsey's passionate adherence to a policy of peace. With the instinct of despotism he had seen that the real danger which menaced the New Monarchy lay in the tradition of the English Parliament; and though Henry had thrice called together the Houses to supply the expenses of his earlier struggle with France, Wolsey governed during eight years of peace without once assembling them. The ordinary resources of the Crown, however, were inadequate to meet the expenses of war, but so strong was Wolsey's antipathy to Parliaments

1519.

1522.

Digitized by Google

that he resorted to a measure of arbitrary taxation whose success would have rendered it needless ever to convoke Parliament again. A forced loan was assessed upon the whole kingdom. Twenty thousand pounds were exacted from London; and its wealthier citizens were summoned before the Cardinal and required to give an account of the value of their estates. Commissioners were despatched into 1522. every county for the purpose of assessment, and precepts were issued on their information, requiring in some cases supplies of soldiers, in others a tenth of a man's annual income, for the King's service. So poor, however, was the return that in the following year Wolsey was forced to summon Parliament and lay before it the unprecedented demand of a property-tax of twenty per cent. The demand was 1523. made by the Cardinal in person, but he was received with obstinate silence. It was in vain that Wolsey called on member after member to speak; and his appeal to More, who had been elected to the chair of the House of Commons, was met by the Speaker's falling on his knees and representing his powerlessness to reply till he had received instructions from the House itself. The effort to overawe the Commons failed, and Wolsey no sooner withdrew than an angry debate began. He again returned to answer the objections which had been raised, and again the Commons foiled the unconstitutional attempt to influence their deliberations by refusing to discuss the matter in his presence. The struggle continued for a fortnight; and though successful in procuring a subsidy, the Court party were forced to content themselves with less than half Wolsey's demand. His anger at this burst of sturdy in- 1524. dependence flung back the Cardinal on the system of Benevolences. A tenth was demanded from the laity, and a fourth from the clergy in every county by the Royal Commissioners. There was "sore grudging and murmuring"—Warham wrote to the Court—"among the people." "If men should give their goods by a commission," said the Kentish squires, "then it would be worse than the taxes of France, and England should be bond not free." The keen political instinct of the nation already discerned that in the question of self-taxation was involved that of the very existence of freedom. The clergy put themselves in the forefront of the resistance, and preached from every pulpit that the commission was contrary to the liberties of the realm, and that the King could take no man's goods but by process of law. So stirred was the nation that Wolsey bent to the storm, and offered to rely on the voluntary benevolences of each subject. But the Act which declared all Benevolences illegal was recalled to memory, and the demand was evaded by London, while the Commissioners were driven out of Kent. A revolt, indeed, which broke out in Suffolk was only prevented from spreading by the unconditional withdrawal of the Royal demand.

Wolsey's defeat saved English freedom for the moment; but the

Digitized by Google

**The Agrarian Discontent.**

danger from which he shrank was not merely that of a conflict with the sense of liberty. The murmurs of the Kentish squires only swelled the ever-deepening voice of public discontent. If the condition of the land question in the end gave strength to the Crown by making it the security for public order, it became a terrible peril at every crisis of conflict between the monarchy and the landowners. The steady rise in the price of wool was at this period giving a fresh impulse to the agrarian changes which had been going steadily on for the last hundred years, to the throwing together of the smaller holdings, and the introduction of sheep-farming on an enormous scale. The merchant classes, too, whose prosperity we have already noticed, were investing largely in land, and these "farming gentlemen and clerking knights," as Latimer bitterly styled them, were restrained by few traditions or associations in their eviction of the smaller tenants. The land, indeed, had been greatly underlet; "that which went heretofore for twenty or forty pounds a year," we learn from the same source, "now is let for fifty or a hundred;" and the new purchasers were quick in making profit by a general rise in rents. It had been only by the low scale of rent, indeed, that the small yeomanry class had been enabled to exist. "My father," says Latimer, "was a yeoman, and had no lands of his own; only he had a farm of three or four pounds by the year at the uttermost, and hereupon he tilled so much as kept half-a-dozen men. He had walk for a hundred sheep, and my mother milked thirty kine; he was able and did find the King a harness with himself and his horse while he came to the place that he should receive the King's wages. I can remember that I buckled his harness when he went to Blackheath Field. He kept me to school: he married my sisters with five pounds apiece, so that he brought them up in godliness and fear of God. He kept hospitality for his poor neighbours, and some alms he gave to the poor, and all this he did of the same farm, where he that now hath it payeth sixteen pounds by year or more, and is not able to do anything for his prince, for himself, nor for his children, or give a cup of drink to the poor." The bitterness of ejection was increased by the iniquitous means which were often employed to bring it about. The farmers, if we believe More, were "got rid of either by fraud or force, or tired out with repeated wrongs into parting with their property." "In this way it comes to pass that these poor wretches, men, women, husbands, orphans, widows, parents with little children, households greater in number than in wealth (for arable farming requires many hands, while one shepherd and herdsman will suffice for a pasture farm), all these emigrate from their native fields without knowing where to go." The sale of their scanty household stuff drove them to wander homeless abroad, to be thrown into prison as vagabonds, to beg and to steal. Yet in the face of such a spectacle as this we still find the old complaint of scarcity of labour, and the old legal remedy for it in a fixed

Digitized by Google

scale of wages. The social disorder, in fact, baffled Wolsey's sagacity, and he could find no better remedy for it than laws against the further extension of sheep-farms, and a terrible increase of public executions. Both were alike fruitless. Enclosures and evictions went on as before. "If you do not remedy the evils which produce thieves," More urged with bitter truth, "the rigorous execution of justice in punishing thieves will be vain." But even More could only suggest a remedy which, efficacious as it was subsequently to prove, had yet to wait a century for its realization. "Let the woollen manufacture be introduced, so that honest employment may be found for those whom want has made thieves, or will make thieves ere long." The mass of social disorder grew steadily greater; while the break up of the great military households of the nobles which was still going on, and the return of wounded and disabled soldiers from the wars, introduced a yet more dangerous leaven of outrage and crime.

**The Divorce.**

This public discontent, as well as the exhaustion of the treasury, added bitterness to the miserable result of the war. To France, indeed, the struggle had been disastrous, for the loss of the Milanese and the capture of Francis the First in the defeat of Pavia laid her at the feet of the Emperor. But England, as before, gained nothing from two useless campaigns, and in the heat of Henry's disappointment Wolsey found it possible again to negotiate a peace. Falling back on his old policy, he drew closer the French alliance and gave a cautious support to Francis; while he carefully abstained from any part in the fresh war which broke out on the refusal of the French monarch to fulfil the terms by which he had purchased his release. But the Cardinal's mind was already dwelling on a step by which he hoped to make any new return to the Spanish policy impossible. As a princess of Spain, and aunt to the Emperor, the Queen, Catherine of Arragon, stood at the head of the Spanish party; and Wolsey bitterly resented the part she had taken in the recent breach with France. But the death of child after child, and the want of a son, had already roused a superstitious dread in Henry's mind that his marriage with a brother's widow, though sanctioned by the Church, was marked with the curse of Heaven. In the King's dread, Wolsey saw the opportunity of sowing a deadly quarrel between England and Spain. From whatever quarter the notion of a divorce was first suggested to Henry, it was at once supported by the Cardinal. It was probably at his suggestion that doubts were expressed as to the validity of the King's marriage and on the legitimacy of its issue, the Lady Mary, by the French negotiators of the treaty of alliance. Wolsey was looking forward, not only to a breach with the Emperor, but to the supplying Catherine's place with a princess of France. But the desires of Henry outran the policy of his minister. His conscientious scruples were suddenly quickened by the charms of Anne Boleyn, a young lady of his Court; and this passion, neglected

1525.

1527.



Digitized by Google

and despised by Wolsey as a mere intrigue of gallantry, was skilfully fanned by the gay beauty and dexterous reserve of Anne herself, as well as by the support of the Duke of Norfolk, with whose family her own was connected. At a moment when no communication had as yet been made to the world of his desire for a divorce, nor any application laid before the Pope for the annulling of his former marriage, Henry suddenly announced to the Cardinal his resolve on the new union. The remonstrances which Wolsey offered on his knees were only atoned for by his promise of fresh zeal in the cause of the divorce. But the matter was no sooner divulged than its difficulties became manifest. In the Royal Council itself it received small support. The most learned of the English bishops, Fisher of Rochester, declared openly against it. The English theologians, who were consulted on the validity of the Papal dispensation which had allowed Henry's marriage to take place, referred the King to the Pope for a decision of the question. The commercial classes shrank from a step which involved an irretrievable breach with the Emperor, who was master of their great market in Flanders. Above all, the iniquity of the proposal jarred against the public conscience. But neither danger nor shame availed against the King's wilfulness and passion. Wolsey's suggestions of caution met only with reproaches, and Henry's confidence was fatally lost as the Cardinal became suspected of covert opposition to his favourite project. Norfolk and Anne Boleyn's father, created at a later time Lord Rochford, who gained more and more the upper hand in the Council, pushed the divorce resolutely on. It was in vain that Clement the Seventh, perplexed at once by his wish to gratify Henry, his own conscientious doubts as to the possibility of the course proposed, and his terror of the Emperor, whose power was now predominant in Italy, suggested that the King should act on his own responsibility. Henry was resolute in demanding a legal declaration of the invalidity of the Papal bull on which his first marriage rested, and the Pope was forced at last to issue a commission to the Cardinals Wolsey and Campeggio for a trial of the facts on which the King's application was based. Months, however, passed in negotiations for the purpose of evading such an issue. The Cardinals pressed on Catherine the expediency of her withdrawal to a religious house, while Henry pressed on the Pope that of a settlement of the matter by his formal declaration against the validity of the marriage. It was not till both efforts had failed that the Court met at the Blackfriars. The Queen, who saw in Wolsey her enemy rather than a judge, only appeared to offer an appeal to Clement; and on the refusal of the Cardinals to admit it she flung herself at Henry's feet. "Sire," said Catherine, "I beseech you to pity me, a woman and a stranger, without an assured friend and without an indifferent counsellor. I take God to witness that I have always been to you a true

Digitized by Google

and loyal wife, that I have made it my constant duty to seek your pleasure, that I have loved all whom you loved, whether I have reason or not, whether they are friends to me or foes. I have been your wife for years, I have brought you many children. God knows that when I came to your bed I was a virgin, and I put it to your own conscience to say whether it was not so. If there be any offence which can be alleged against me I consent to depart with infamy: if not, then I pray you to do me justice." The piteous appeal was wasted on a King who was already entertaining Anne Boleyn with royal state in his own palace. The case proceeded; but Clement, who was now wholly in the Emperor's hands, had already cited it before him at Rome; and the Cardinals, though as yet ignorant of the Pope's decision, decided on an adjournment for the purpose of consulting him as to the judgment they should pronounce.

**The Fall of Wolsey.**

"Never did Cardinal bring good to England," exclaimed Wolsey's bitter enemy, the Duke of Suffolk, as the court adjourned. "Of all men living," Wolsey boldly retorted, "you, my lord Duke, have the least reason to dispraise Cardinals, for if I, a poor Cardinal, had not been, you would not now have had a head on your shoulders wherewith to make such a brag in disrepute of us." But both the Cardinal and his enemies knew that the minister's doom was sealed. Henry, who had throughout suspected him of being no friend to his project, was furious at the sudden scruples of conscience which frustrated his will. Wolsey was at once banished from the Court, and a promise was extorted from her royal lover by Anne Boleyn to see him no more. The Duke of Norfolk, who took his place at the Council board, was not only the head of her own party but the chief opponent of the French alliance; and his belief that the divorce had been hindered only by the ill-will of the Emperor to Wolsey induced Henry to draw nearer again to Spain, and to seek to obtain his object by negotiation with Charles himself. But the utter ruin of the discarded minister was necessary for the success of the new policy, and the Cardinal was at once prosecuted for a transgression of the Statute of Præmunire by holding his Court as Legate within the realm. Wolsey was prostrated by the blow. He offered to give up everything he possessed if the King would but cease from his displeasure. "His face," wrote the French ambassador, "is dwindled to half its natural size. In truth, his misery is such that his enemies, Englishmen as they are, cannot help pitying him." Office and wealth were flung desperately at the King's feet, and for a time ruin seemed averted. A thousand boats full of London citizens covered the Thames to see the Cardinal's barge pass to the Tower, but he was permitted to retire to Esher, and Henry for the moment seemed content with his disgrace. Pardon was granted him on the surrender of his vast possessions to the Crown, and he was ordered to proceed at once to his Archbishopric, the one dignity he



Digitized by Google

SEC. V.
WOLSEY.
1515-1531.
1530

was suffered to retain. But hardly a year had passed before his popularity in the north revived the jealousy of his political rivals, and on the eve of his installation-feast he was arrested on a charge of high treason, and conducted by the Lieutenant of the Tower towards London. Already broken by his enormous labours, by internal disease, and the sense of his fall, the old man accepted the arrest as a sentence of death. An attack of dysentery forced him to rest at the Abbey of Leicester, and as he reached the gate he said feebly to the brethren who met him, "I am come to lay my bones among you." On his death-bed his thoughts still clung to the prince whom he had served. "He is a Prince," said the dying man to the Lieutenant of the Tower, "of a most royal courage: sooner than miss any part of his will, he will endanger one half of his kingdom: and I do assure you I have often kneeled before him, sometimes for three hours together, to persuade him from his appetite, and could not prevail. And, Master Knygton, had I but served God as diligently as I have served the King, He would not have given me over in my grey hairs. But this is my due reward for my pains and study, not regarding my service to God, but only my duty to my prince." No words could paint with so terrible a truthfulness the spirit of the New Monarchy, which Wolsey had done more than any of those who went before him to raise into an overwhelming despotism. All sense of loyalty to England, to its freedom, to its institutions, had utterly passed away. The one duty which fills the statesman's mind is a duty "to his prince," a prince whose personal will and appetite was overriding the highest interests of the State, trampling under foot the wisest councils, and crushing with the blind ingratitude of a Fate the servants who opposed him. But even Wolsey, while he recoiled from the monstrous form which he had created, could hardly have dreamed of the work of destruction which the royal courage, and yet more royal appetite, of his master was to accomplish in the years to come.

### Section. VI.—Thomas Cromwell. 1530–1540.

[*Authorities.*—Cromwell's early life, as told by Foxe, is a mass of fable; what we really know of it may be seen conveniently put together in Dean Hook's "Life of Archbishop Cranmer." For his ministry, the only real authorities are the State Papers for this period, which are now being calendared for the Master of the Rolls. For the close of Sir Thomas More, see the touching account in his Life by Roper. The more important documents for the religious history of the time will be found in Mr. Pocock's new edition of "Burnet's History of the Reformation"; those relating to the dissolution of the Monasteries, in the collection of letters on that subject published by the Camden Society, and in the "Original Letters" of Sir Henry Ellis. A mass of material of very various value has been accumulated by Strype in his collections, which begin at this time. Mr. Froude's narrative ("History of England,"

Digitized by Google

vols. i. ii. iii.), though of great literary merit, is disfigured by a love of paradox, by hero-worship, and by a reckless defence of tyranny and crime. It possesses, during this period, little or no historical value.]



The ten years which follow the fall of Wolsey are among the most momentous in our history. The New Monarchy at last realized its power, and the work for which Wolsey had paved the way was carried out with a terrible thoroughness. The one great institution which could still offer resistance to the Royal will was struck down. The Church became a mere instrument of the central despotism. The people learned their helplessness in rebellions easily suppressed and avenged with ruthless severity. A reign of terror, organized with consummate and merciless skill, held England panic-stricken at Henry's feet. The noblest heads rolled on the block. Virtue and learning could not save Thomas More: royal descent could not save Lady Salisbury. The execution of queen after queen taught England that nothing was too high for Henry's "courage," or too sacred for his "appetite." Parliament assembled only to sanction acts of unscrupulous tyranny, or to build up by its own statutes the great fabric of absolute rule. All the constitutional safe-guards of English freedom were swept away. Arbitrary taxation, arbitrary legislation, arbitrary imprisonment were powers claimed without dispute and unsparingly exercised by the Crown.

The history of this great revolution, for it is nothing less, is the history of a single man. In the whole line of English statesmen there is no one of whom we would willingly know so much, no one of whom we really know so little, as of Thomas Cromwell. When he meets us in Henry's service he is already past middle life; and during his earlier years it is hardly possible to do more than disentangle a few fragmentary facts from the mass of fable which gathered round them. His youth was one of roving adventure; whether he was the son of a poor blacksmith at Putney or no, he could hardly have been more than a boy when he was engaged in the service of the Marchioness of Dorset. He must still have been young when he took part as a common soldier in the wars of Italy, a "ruffian," as he owned afterwards to Cranmer, in the most unscrupulous school the world contained. But it was a school in which he learned lessons even more dangerous than those of the camp. He not only mastered the Italian language, but drank in the manners and tone of the Italy around him, the Italy of the Borgias and the Medici. It was with Italian versatility that he turned from the camp to the counting-house; he was certainly engaged as the commercial agent to one of the Venetian merchants; tradition finds him as a clerk at Antwerp, and history at last encounters him as a thriving wool merchant at Middleborough a few years after the opening of Henry's reign. By adding the trade of scrivener, something

1512.

Digitized by Google

Sec. VI.
Thomas Cromwell.
1530-1540.

1528. between that of a banker and attorney, to his other occupations, as well as by advancing money to the poorer nobles, Cromwell continued to amass wealth as years went on; and on the outbreak of the second war with France we find him a busy and influential member of the Commons in Parliament. Five years later the aim of his ambition was declared by his entrance into Wolsey's service. The Cardinal needed a man of business for the suppression of some smaller monasteries which he had undertaken, and for the transfer of their revenues to his foundations at Oxford and Ipswich. The task was an unpopular one, and it was carried out with a rough indifference to the feelings it aroused which involved Cromwell in the hate which was gathering round his master. But his wonderful self-reliance and sense of power only broke upon the world at Wolsey's fall. Of the hundreds of dependents who waited on the Cardinal's nod, Cromwell was the only one who clung faithfully to him at the last. In the lonely hours of his disgrace at Esher, Wolsey "made his moan unto Master Cromwell, who comforted him the best he could, and desired my Lord to give him leave to go to London, where he would make or mar, which was always his common saying." The next day saw him admitted to Henry's service, but still vigorous in his exertions to save the Cardinal. It was to Cromwell's efforts in Parliament that Wolsey owed his escape from impeachment, and it was by him that the negotiations were conducted which permitted the fallen minister to retire to York. A general esteem seems to have rewarded this rare instance of fidelity to a ruined patron. "For his honest behaviour in his master's cause he was esteemed the most faithfullest servant, and was of all men greatly commended." But Henry's protection rested on other grounds. The ride to London had ended in a private interview with the King, in which Cromwell boldly advised him to cut the knot of the divorce by the simple exercise of his own Supremacy. The advice struck the key-note of the later policy by which the daring counsellor was to change the whole face of Church and State, but Henry still clung to the hopes held out by his new ministers, and shrunk perhaps as yet from the bare absolutism to which Cromwell called him. The advice at any rate was concealed, and, though high in the King's favour, his new servant waited patiently the progress of events.

**Norfolk and More.**

For success in procuring the divorce Norfolk relied not only on the alliance and aid of the Emperor, but on the moral support which the project was expected to receive from the Parliament. The reassembling of the two Houses marked the close of the system of Wolsey. It was a step in fact which we can hardly err in attributing to the influence of the adherents whom Norfolk found in the party of the New Learning. To them, as to his mere political adversaries, the Cardinal's fall opened a prospect of better things. The dream of More

Digitized by Google

in accepting the office of Chancellor, if we may judge it from the acts of his brief ministry, seems to have been that of carrying out the religious reformation which had been demanded by Colet and Erasmus, while checking the spirit of revolt against the unity of the Church. His severities against the Protestants, exaggerated as they have been by polemic rancour, remain the one stain on a memory that knows no other. But it was only by a rigid severance of the cause of reform, from what seemed to him the cause of revolution, that More probably hoped for a successful issue to the projects he laid before Parliament. The Petition of the Commons sounded like an echo of Colet's famous address to the Convocation. It attributed the growth of heresy not more to "frantic and seditious books published in the English tongue contrary to the very true Catholic and Christian faith" than to "the extreme and uncharitable behaviour of divers ordinaries." It remonstrated against the legislation of the clergy in Convocation without the King's assent or that of his subjects, the oppressive procedure of the Church Courts, the abuses of ecclesiastical patronage, and the excessive number of holydays. Henry referred the Petition to the bishops, but their only reply was a refusal of redress. The new ministry persisted, however, in pushing through the Commons their bills for ecclesiastical reform. The questions of Convocation and the Bishops' Courts were adjourned for further consideration, but the fees of the Courts were curtailed, the clergy restricted from lay employments, pluralities restrained, and residence enforced. In spite of a dogged opposition from the bishops the bills received the assent of the House of Lords, "to the great rejoicing of lay people, and the great displeasure of spiritual persons." The importance of the new measures lay really in the action of Parliament. They were an explicit announcement that church-reform was now to be undertaken, not by the clergy, but by the people at large. On the other hand, it was clear that it would be carried out, not in a spirit of hostility, but of loyalty to the Church. The Commons forced from Bishop Fisher an apology for words which were taken as a doubt thrown on their orthodoxy. If Henry forbad the circulation of a translation of the Bible executed by Tyndale in a Protestant spirit, he carefully promised a more correct version. More devoted himself to the task of crushing by a strict execution of the laws the hopes raised in the minds of the sectaries by the fall of Wolsey. But the domestic aims of the New Learning were foiled by the failure of the Ministry in its negotiations for the divorce. The severance of the French alliance and the accession of the Spanish party to power failed to detach Charles from his aunt's cause. The solemn remonstrance of the Parliament against the Pope's delay of justice produced little effect on Clement, who was now looking to the Emperor for the restoration of Florence to his Medicean house. The ministers eagerly accepted the suggestion of a Cambridge scholar, Thomas Cranmer,

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI.

THOMAS CROMWELL.
1530-1540.

that the universities of Europe should be called on for their judgment; but the appeal to the learned opinion of Christendom ended in utter defeat. In France the profuse bribery of the English agents would have failed with the University of Paris but for the interference of Francis himself. As shameless an exercise of Henry's own authority was required to wring an approval of his cause from Oxford and Cambridge. In Germany the very Protestants, in the fervour of their moral revival, were dead against the King. So far as could be seen from Cranmer's test every learned man in Christendom condemned Henry's cause.

**Cromwell and the Church.**

It was at the moment when every expedient had been exhausted by Norfolk and his fellow ministers that Cromwell came again to the front. Despair of other means drove Henry at last to adopt the bold plan from which he had shrunk at Wolsey's fall. The plan was simply that the King should disavow the Papal jurisdiction, declare himself Head of the Church within his realm, and obtain a divorce from his own Ecclesiastical Courts. But with Cromwell the divorce was but the prelude to a series of changes he was bent upon accomplishing. In all the chequered life of the new minister what had left its deepest stamp on him was Italy. Not only in the rapidity and ruthlessness of his designs, but in their larger scope, their clearer purpose, and their admirable combination, the Italian state-craft entered with Cromwell into English politics. He is, in fact, the first English minister in whom we can trace through the whole period of his rule the steady working out of a great and definite purpose. His purpose was to raise the King to absolute authority on the ruins of every rival power within the realm. It was not that Cromwell was a mere slave of tyranny. Whether we may trust the tale that carries him in his youth to Florence or no, his statesmanship was closely modelled on the ideal of the Florentine thinker whose book was constantly in his hand. Even as a servant of Wolsey he startled the future Cardinal, Reginald Pole, by bidding him take for his manual in politics the "Prince" of Machiavelli. Machiavelli hoped to find in Cæsar Borgia, or in the later Lorenzo di Medici, a tyrant who after crushing all rival tyrannies might unite and regenerate Italy; and it is possible to see in the policy of Cromwell the aim of securing enlightenment and order for England by the concentration of all authority in the Crown. The one check on this royal absolutism which had survived the Wars of the Roses lay in the wealth, the independent synods and jurisdiction, and the religious claims of the Church. To reduce the great ecclesiastical body to a mere department of the State, in which all authority should flow from the sovereign alone, and in which his will should be the only law, his decision the only test of truth, was a change hardly to be wrought without a struggle; and it was the opportunity for such a struggle that Cromwell saw in the divorce.

Digitized by Google

His first blow was decisive. He had saved Wolsey from the charge of treason, but he now suffered him to fall under the penalties of Præmunire for his exercise of Papal jurisdiction, as Legate, within the land. The whole nation was declared to have been formally involved in the same charge by its acceptance of his authority, but the legal absurdity was redressed by a general pardon. From this pardon the clergy alone found themselves omitted. They were told that forgiveness could be bought at no less a price than the payment of a fine amounting to a million of our present money, and the acknowledgement of the King as "Protector and only supreme Head of the Church and Clergy of England." To the first demand they at once submitted; against 1531.
the second they struggled hard, but their appeals to Henry and to Cromwell met only with demands for instant obedience. The words were at last submitted by Warham to the Convocation. There was a general silence. "Whoever is silent seems to consent," said the Archbishop. "Then are we all silent," replied a voice from among the crowd, and the assent was accepted. To every mind but Cromwell's the words seemed but a menace to the Pope, a threat which was backed by the demand for a settlement of the question addressed to Clement on the part of the House of Lords. "The cause of his Majesty," the Peers were made to say, "is the cause of each of ourselves." If Clement would not confirm what was described as the judgment of the Universities "our condition will not be wholly irremediable. Extreme remedies are ever harsh of application, but he that is sick will by all means be rid of his distemper." The expulsion of Catherine from the King's palace gave emphasis to the demand. But Cromwell still kept his hand on the troubled Churchmen. Convocation was made to propose the withdrawal of the payment of first-fruits to Rome on the promotion of bishops, and to petition that, should the Papacy resent such a step by a refusal to recognize the prelates who declined to pay them, then, "may it please your Highness to ordain in this present Parliament that the obedience of your Highness and of the people be withdrawn from the See of Rome." A bill to this effect was passed, but with a provision which suspended it as a menace over the Pope's head at the discretion of the Crown. Menaces, however, fell unheeded on the Roman Court. While still suggesting a 1531
compromise as to the main point at issue, Clement boldly rebuked Henry for the indelicacy of his relations with Anne Boleyn, who had taken her rival's place in the King's palace; and ordered him to restore Catherine, till the cause was tried, to her lawful position as Queen. By a brief which was posted on the church doors in Flanders, he inhibited him, on pain of excommunication, from seeking a divorce in his own English Courts, or from contracting a new marriage. Henry replied, not merely by a secret union with Anne Boleyn, but by the Statute of Appeals, which forbade all further processes in the Court of

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI.

THOMAS CROMWELL. 1530-1540.

1533.

Rome and annihilated, as far as his English subjects were concerned, the judicial jurisdiction of the Papacy. Cranmer, an active partisan of the divorce, was named on Warham's death to the See of Canterbury; proceedings were at once commenced in his Court; and the marriage of Catherine was formally declared invalid by the new Primate at Dunstable. A week later Cranmer set on the brow of Anne Boleyn the crown which she had so long coveted.

**The Supremacy.**

As yet the real character of Cromwell's ecclesiastical policy had been disguised by its connexion with the divorce. But though formal negotiations continued between England and Rome, until Clement's final decision in Catherine's favour, they had no longer any influence on the series of measures which in their rapid succession changed the whole character of the English Church. The acknowledgment of Henry's title as its Protector and Head was soon found by the clergy to have been more than a form of words. It was the first step in a policy by which the Church was to be prostrated at the foot of the throne. Convocation was forced to recognize the necessity of the Royal permission and assent for the validity of its proceedings and decisions. A new Act turned the bishops into mere nominees of the King. Their election by the chapters of their cathedral churches had long become formal, and their appointment had since the time of the Edwards been practically made by the Papacy on the nomination of the Crown. The privilege of free election was now with bitter irony left to the chapters, but they were compelled to receive the candidate chosen by the King on pain of præmunire. This strange expedient has lasted till the present time; but its character has wholly changed since the restoration of constitutional rule. The nomination of bishops has ever since the accession of the Georges passed from the King in person to the minister who represents the will of the people. Practically, therefore, an English prelate, alone among all the prelates of the world, is now raised to his episcopal throne by the same popular election which raised Ambrose to his episcopal chair at Milan. But at the moment, Cromwell's measure reduced the English bishops to absolute dependence on the Crown. Their dependence would have been complete had his policy been thoroughly carried out, and the royal power of deposition put in force as well as that of appointment. As it was, Henry could warn the Archbishop of Dublin that if he persevered in his "proud folly, we be able to remove you again and to put another man of more virtue and honesty in your place." Even Elizabeth in a burst of ill-humour threatened to "unfrock" the Bishop of Ely. By Cromwell's more ardent partizans this dependence of the bishops on the Crown was fully recognized. On the death of Henry the Eighth, Cranmer took out a new commission from Edward for the exercise of his office. Latimer, when the Royal policy clashed with his belief, felt

Digitized by Google

bound to resign the See of Worcester. That the power of deposition was at a later time quietly abandoned was due not so much to any deference for the religious instincts of the nation, but to the fact that the steady servility of the bishops rendered it absolutely unnecessary. When Convocation was once silenced, and the bishops fairly at Henry's feet, the ground was cleared for the great Statute by which the new character of the Church was defined. The Act of Supremacy ordered 1534. that the King "shall be taken, accepted, and reputed the only supreme Head in earth of the Church of England, and shall have and enjoy annexed and united to the Imperial Crown of this realm as well the title and style thereof as all the honours, jurisdictions, authorities, immunities, profits, and commodities to the said dignity belonging, with full power to visit, repress, redress, reform, and amend all such errors, heresies, abuses, contempts, and enormities, which by any manner of spiritual authority or jurisdiction might or may lawfully be reformed." Authority in all matters ecclesiastical, as well as civil, was vested solely in the Crown. The "courts spiritual" became as thoroughly the King's courts as the temporal courts at Westminster. Convocation could only deliberate by the Royal license, and its decisions were of no validity without the Royal assent. It was the Crown alone which could legally repress error or redress spiritual abuses. But the full meaning which Cromwell attached to the Supremacy was seen on his elevation to the new post of Vicar-General, or Vice-gerent of the King in all matters ecclesiastical. His first act was to seize into the 1535. hands of the Crown the one means of speaking to the people at large which existed at that time. With the instinct of genius he discerned the part which the pulpit was to play in the religious and political struggle which was at hand, and he resolved to turn it to the profit of the monarchy. The clergy learned by injunction after injunction that they were regarded, and must learn to regard themselves, as mere mouth-pieces of the Royal will. The restriction of the right of preaching to priests who received licenses from the Crown silenced every voice of opposition. Even to those who received these licenses theological controversy was forbidden. The process of "tuning the pulpits" made them at every crisis the means of diffusing the Royal will. At the moment of Henry's last quarrel with Rome every bishop, abbot, and parish priest was required to preach against the usurpations of the Papacy and to proclaim the King as the Supreme Head of the Church. The very heads of the sermon were prescribed; and the bishops were held responsible for the compliance of the clergy with these orders, as the sheriffs were held responsible for the compliance of the bishops. It was only when all possibility of resistance was at an end, when the Church was gagged and its pulpits turned into mere echoes of Henry's will, that Cromwell ventured on his last and crowning change, that of claiming for the Crown the right of dictating at its

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI.
THOMAS CROMWELL.
1530-1540.

pleasure the form of faith and doctrine to be held and taught throughout the land. A purified Catholicism such as Erasmus and Colet had dreamed of was now to be the religion of England. But the dream of the New Learning was to be wrought out, not by the progress of education and piety, but by the brute force of the New Monarchy. The Articles of Religion, which Convocation received and adopted without venturing on a protest, were drawn up by the hand of Henry himself. The Bible and the three Creeds were laid down as the sole grounds of faith. The Sacraments were reduced from seven to three, only Penance being allowed to rank on an equality with Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The assertion of the doctrines of Transubstantiation and Confession was compensated by the acknowledgment of Justification by Faith, a doctrine for which the friends of the New Learning, such as Pole and Contarini, were struggling at Rome itself. The spirit of Erasmus was seen in the condemnation of purgatory, of pardons, and of masses for the dead, in the admission of prayers for the dead, and in the retention of the ceremonies of the Church without material change. Enormous as was the doctrinal revolution, not a murmur broke the assent of Convocation, and the Articles were sent by the Vicar-General into every county to be obeyed at men's peril. The plans of the New Learning were carried steadily out in the series of Royal Injunctions which followed. Pilgrimages were suppressed; the excessive number of holydays diminished; the worship of images and relics discouraged in words which seem almost copied from the protest of Erasmus. His burning appeal for a translation of the Bible which weavers might repeat at their shuttle, and ploughmen sing at their plough received at last a reply. The Bible was formally adopted as the basis of English faith. As a preliminary measure the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments were at once translated into English, and ordered to be taught by every schoolmaster and father of a family to his children or pupils. In the outset of the ministry of Norfolk and More, the King had promised a new version of the Scriptures, but the work lagged for five years in the hands of the bishops till Miles Coverdale, a friend of Cranmer, was employed to collect and revise the translations of Tyndale, and the Bible which he edited appeared under the avowed patronage of Henry himself. The story of the Supremacy was graven on its very title-page. The new foundation of religious truth was to be regarded throughout England as a gift, not from the Church, but from the King. It is Henry on his throne who gives the sacred volume to Cranmer; ere Cranmer and Cromwell can distribute it to the throng of priests and laymen below.

1536.

**The Dissolution of the Monasteries.**

The temper of the New Learning was seen yet more clearly in Cromwell's attitude towards the monastic orders. In the early days of Erasmus popes and bishops had joined with princes and scholars in welcoming the diffusion of culture and the hopes of religious reform.

Digitized by Google

But though an abbot or a prior here or there might be found among the supporters of the movement, the monastic orders, as a whole, repelled it with unswerving obstinacy. The quarrel only became more bitter as years went on. The keen sarcasms of Erasmus, the insolent buffoonery of Hutten, were lavished on the "lovers of darkness" and of the cloister. In England Colet and More echoed with greater reserve the scorn and invective of their friends. As an outlet for religious enthusiasm, indeed, monasticism was practically dead. The friar, now that his fervour of devotion and his intellectual energy had passed away, had sunk into the mere beggar. The monks had become mere landowners. Most of their houses were anxious only to enlarge their revenues and to diminish the number of those who shared them. In the general carelessness which prevailed as to the religious objects of their trust, in the wasteful management of their estates, in the indolence and self-indulgence which for the most part characterized them, the monastic houses simply exhibited the faults of all corporate bodies which have outlived the work which they were created to perform. But they were no more unpopular than such corporate bodies generally are. The Lollard cry for their suppression had died away. In the north, where some of the greatest abbeys were situated, the monks were on good terms with the country gentry, and their houses served as schools for their children; nor is there any sign of a different feeling elsewhere. But in Cromwell's system there was no room for either the virtues or the vices of monasticism, for its indolence and superstition, or for its independence both of the episcopate and the throne. While the changes we have narrated were going on, two Royal Commissioners, Legh and Leyton, had been despatched on a general visitation of the religious houses, and their reports formed a "Black Book" which was laid before Parliament on their return. It was acknowledged that about a third of the religious houses, including the bulk of the larger abbeys, were fairly and decently conducted. The rest were charged with drunkenness, with simony, and with the foulest and most revolting crimes. The character of the visitors, the sweeping nature of their report, and the long debate which followed on its reception, leaves little doubt that the charges were grossly exaggerated, but there is no ground for believing them to have been wholly untrue. The want of any effective discipline, which had resulted from their exemption from any but Papal supervision, told fatally against monastic morality, even in abbeys like St. Alban's; and the acknowledgment of Warham, as well as the partial measure of suppression begun by Wolsey, go far to prove that in the smaller houses, at least, indolence had passed into crime. But in spite of the cry of "Down with them" which broke from the Commons as the report was read, the country was still far from desiring the utter downfall of the monastic system. A long and

1536.

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI.
THOMAS. CROMWELL.
1530-1540.
The Terror.

bitter debate was followed by a compromise which suppressed all houses whose income fell below £200 a year, and granted their revenues to the Crown; but the great abbeys were still preserved intact.

The debate on the suppression of the Monasteries was the first instance of opposition with which Cromwell had met, and for some time longer it was to remain the only one. While the great revolution which struck down the Church was in progress, England simply held her breath. It is only through the stray depositions of Royal spies that we catch a glimpse of the wrath and hate which lay seething under this terrible silence of a whole people. For the silence was a silence of terror. Before Cromwell's rise and after his fall from power the reign of Henry the Eighth witnessed no more than the common tyranny and bloodshed of the time. But the years of Cromwell's administration form the one period in our history which deserves the name which men have given to the rule of Robespierre. It was the English Terror. It was by terror that Cromwell mastered the King; it was by terror that he mastered the people. Cranmer could plead for him at a later time with Henry as "one whose surety was only by your Majesty, who loved your Majesty, as I ever thought, no less than God." But the attitude of Cromwell towards the King was something more than that of absolute dependence and unquestioning devotion. He was "so vigilant to preserve your Majesty from all treasons," adds the Primate, "that few could be so secretly conceived but he detected the same from the beginning." Henry, like every Tudor, was fearless of open danger, but tremulously sensitive to the lightest breath of hidden disloyalty. It was on this inner dread that Cromwell based the fabric of his power. He was hardly secretary before a host of spies were scattered broadcast over the land. Thousands of secret denunciations poured into the open ear of the minister. The air was soon thick with tales of plots and conspiracies, and with the detection and suppression of each Cromwell tightened his hold on the King. With Henry to back him he could strike boldly at England itself. The same terror which had mastered the King was employed to master the people. Men felt in England—to use the figure by which Erasmus paints the time—"as if a scorpion lay sleeping under every stone." The confessional had no secrets for Cromwell. Men's talk with their closest friends found its way to his ear. "Words idly spoken," the murmurs of a petulant abbot, the ravings of a moon-struck nun, were, as the nobles cried passionately at his fall, "tortured into treason." The only chance of safety lay in silence. "Friends who used to write and send me presents," Erasmus tells us, "now send neither letter nor gifts, nor receive any from any one, and this through fear." But even the refuge of silence was closed by a law more infamous than any that has ever blotted the Statute-book of England. Not only was thought made treason, but

Digitized by Google

men were forced to reveal their thoughts on pain of their very silence being punished with the penalties of treason. All trust in the older bulwarks of liberty was destroyed by a policy as daring as it was unscrupulous. The noblest institutions were degraded into instruments of terror. Though Wolsey had strained the law to the utmost he had made no open attack on the freedom of justice. If he had shrunk from assembling Parliaments it was from his sense that they were the bulwarks of liberty. Under Cromwell the coercion of juries and the management of judges rendered justice the mere mouth-piece of the royal will: and where even this shadow of justice proved an obstacle to bloodshed, Parliament was brought into play to pass bill after bill of attainder. "He shall be judged by the bloody laws he has himself made," was the cry of the Council at the moment of his fall, and by a singular retribution the crowning injustice which he sought to introduce even into the practice of attainder, the condemnation of a man without hearing his defence, was only practised on himself. But ruthless as was the Terror of Cromwell it was of a nobler type than the Terror of France. He never struck uselessly or capriciously, or stooped to the meaner victims of the Guillotine. His blows were effective just because he chose his victims from among the noblest and the best. If he struck at the Church it was through the Carthusians, the holiest and the most renowned of English Churchmen. If he struck at the baronage it was through Lady Salisbury, in whose veins flowed the blood of kings. If he struck at the New Learning it was through the murder of Sir Thomas More. But no personal vindictiveness mingled with his crime. In temper indeed, so far as we can judge from the few stories which lingered among his friends, he was a generous, kindly-hearted man, with pleasant and winning manners which atoned for a certain awkwardness of person, and with a constancy of friendship which won him a host of devoted adherents. But no touch either of love or hate swayed him from his course. The student of Machiavelli had not studied the "Prince" in vain. He had reduced bloodshed to a system. Fragments of his papers still show us with what a business-like brevity he ticked off human lives among the casual "remembrances" of the day. "Item, the Abbot of Reading to be sent down to be tried and executed at Reading." "Item, to know the King's pleasure touching Master More." "Item, when Master Fisher shall go to his execution, and the other." It is indeed this utter absence of all passion, of all personal feeling, that makes the figure of Cromwell the most terrible in our history. He has an absolute faith in the end he is pursuing, and he simply hews his way to it as a woodman hews his way through the forest, axe in hand.

**The Death of More.**

The choice of his first victim showed the ruthless precision with which Cromwell was to strike. In the general opinion of Europe the foremost Englishman of his time was Sir Thomas More. As the

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI.
THOMAS CROMWELL.
1530-1540.

policy of the divorce ended in an open rupture with Rome he had withdrawn silently from the ministry, but his silent disapproval was more telling than the opposition of obscurer foes. To Cromwell there must have been something specially galling in More's attitude of reserve. The religious reforms of the New Learning were being rapidly carried out, but it was plain that the man who represented the very life of the New Learning believed that the sacrifice of liberty and justice was too dear a price to pay even for religious reform. More was believed to regard the divorce and re-marriage as religiously invalid, though his faith in the power of Parliament to regulate the succession made him regard the children of Anne Boleyn as the legal heirs of the Crown. Cromwell's ingenuity framed an Act of Succession which not only sanctioned the re-marriage but called on all who took the oath of allegiance to declare their belief in the religious validity of the divorce. The Act was no sooner passed than a Royal mandate bade More repair to Lambeth, to the house where he had bandied fun with Warham and Erasmus, or bent over the easel of Holbein. The summons was, as he knew, simply a summons to death, and for a moment there may have been some passing impulse to yield. But it was soon over. "I thank the Lord," More said, with a sudden start, as the boat dropped silently down the river from his garden steps at Chelsea in the early morning; "I thank the Lord that the field is won." Cranmer and his fellow commissioners tendered to him the new oath of allegiance; but, as they expected, it was refused. They bade him walk in the garden that he might reconsider his reply. The day was hot, and More seated himself in a window from which he could look down into the crowded court. Even in the presence of death, the strange sympathy of his nature could enjoy the humour and life of the throng below. "I saw," he said afterwards, "Master Latimer very merry in the court, for he laughed and took one or twain by the neck so handsomely that if they had been women I should have weened that he waxed wanton." The crowd below was chiefly of priests, rectors and vicars, pressing to take the oath that More found harder than death. He bore them no grudge for it. When he heard the voice of one who was known to have boggled hard at the oath a little while before calling loudly and ostentatiously for drink, he only noted him with his peculiar humour. "He drank," More supposed, "either from dryness or from gladness" or "quod ille notus erat Pontifici." He was called in again at last, but only repeated his refusal. It was in vain that Cranmer plied him with distinctions which perplexed even the subtle wit of the ex-chancellor; he remained unshaken and passed to the Tower. For the moment even Cromwell shrank from his blood. More remained a prisoner, while new victims were chosen to overawe the silent but widely spread opposition to the bill of Supremacy. In the general relaxation of the religious life the

1534.

Digitized by Google

charity and devotion of the brethren of the Charter-house had won the reverence even of those who condemned monasticism. After a stubborn resistance they had acknowledged the Royal Supremacy, and taken the oath of submission prescribed by the Act. But by an infamous construction of the statute which made the denial of the Supremacy treason, the refusal of satisfactory answers to official questions as to a conscientious belief in it was held to be equivalent to open denial. The aim of the new measure was well known, and the brethren prepared to die. In the agony of waiting, enthusiasm brought its imaginative consolations; "when the Host was lifted up there came as it were a whisper of air which breathed upon our faces as we knelt; and there came a sweet soft sound of music." They had not long, however, to wait. Their refusal to answer was the signal for their doom. Seven swung from the gallows; the rest were flung into Newgate, chained to posts in a noisome dungeon where, "tied and not able to stir," they were left to perish of gaol-fever and starvation. In a fortnight five were dead and the rest at the point of death, "almost dispatched," Cromwell's envoy wrote to him, "by the hand of God, of which, considering their behaviour, I am not sorry." The interval of imprisonment had failed to break the resolution of More, and the same means sufficed to bring him to the block. A mock trial was hardly necessary for his condemnation, or for that of Fisher, the most learned among the prelates who had favoured the New Learning, and who had been imprisoned on the same charge in the Tower. The old Bishop approached the block with a book of the New Testament in his hand. He opened it at a venture ere he knelt, and read "this is life eternal to know Thee, the only true God." Fisher's death was soon followed by that of More. On the eve of the fatal blow he moved his beard carefully from the block. "Pity that should be cut," he was heard to mutter with a touch of the old sad irony, "that has never committed treason." 1535.

**Cromwell and the Nobles.**

But it required, as Cromwell well knew, heavier blows even than these to break the stubborn resistance of Englishmen to his projects of change, and he seized his opportunity in the Revolt of the North. In the north the monks had been popular; and the outrages with which the dissolution of the smaller abbeys had been accompanied had stirred the blood of the nobles, who were already writhing beneath the rule of one whom they looked upon as a low-born upstart. "The world will never mend," Lord Hussey was heard to say, "till we fight for it." Agrarian discontent and the love of the old religion united in a revolt which broke out in Lincolnshire. The rising was hardly suppressed when Yorkshire was in arms. From every parish the farmers marched with the parish priest at their head upon York, and the surrender of the city determined the waverers. In a few days Skipton Castle, where the Earl of Cumberland held out with a handful of 1536.



Digitized by Google

SEC. VI.
THOMAS CROMWELL.
1530-1540.

servants, was the only spot north of the Humber which remained true to the King. Durham rose at the call of Lords Latimer and Westmoreland. Though the Earl of Northumberland feigned sickness, the Percies joined the revolt. Lord Dacre, the chief of the Yorkshire nobles, surrendered Pomfret, and was at once acknowledged as their chief by the insurgents. The whole nobility of the north were now in arms, and thirty thousand "tall men and well horsed" moved on the Don demanding the reversal of the Royal policy, a reunion with Rome, the restoration of Catherine's daughter, Mary, to her rights as heiress of the Crown, redress for the wrongs done to the Church, and above all the fall of Cromwell. Though their advance was checked by negotiation, the organization of the revolt went steadily on throughout the winter, and a Parliament of the North gathered at Pomfret, and formally adopted the demands of the insurgents. Only six thousand men under Norfolk barred their way southward, and the Midland counties were known to be disaffected. Cromwell, however, remained undaunted by the peril. He suffered Norfolk to negotiate; and allowed Henry, under pressure from his Council, to promise pardon and a free Parliament at York, a pledge which Norfolk and Dacre alike construed into an acceptance of the demands made by the insurgents. Their leaders at once flung aside the badge of the Five Wounds which they had worn, with a cry "We will wear no badge but that of our Lord the King," and nobles and farmers dispersed to their homes in triumph. But the towns of the north were no sooner garrisoned, and Norfolk's army in the heart of Yorkshire, than the veil was flung aside. A few isolated outbreaks gave a
1537. pretext for the withdrawal of every concession. The arrest of the leaders of the "Pilgrimage of Grace," as the insurrection was styled, was followed by ruthless severities. The country was covered with gibbets. Whole districts were given up to military execution. But it was on the nobles that Cromwell's hand fell heaviest. It was only in the north and in the west that any of the old feudal force lingered among them, and he seized his opportunity for dealing at it a last and fatal blow. "Cromwell," Darcy broke fiercely out as he stood at the Council board, "it is thou that art the very special and chief cause of all this rebellion and wickedness, and dost daily travail to bring us to our ends and strike off our heads. I trust that ere thou die, though thou wouldst procure all the noblest heads within the realm to be stricken off, yet there shall one head remain that shall strike off thy head." But the warning was unheeded. Lord Darcy, who stood at the head of the nobles of Yorkshire, and Lord Hussey, who stood at the head of the nobles of Lincolnshire, went alike to the block. The Abbot of Barlings, who had ridden into Lincoln with his canons in full armour, swung with his brother Abbot of Kirkstead from the gallows. The Abbots of Fountains and of

Digitized by Google

Jervaulx were hanged at Tyburn side by side with the representative of the great line of Percy. Lady Bulmer was burnt at the stake. Sir Robert Constable was hanged in chains before the gate of Hull. The blow to the north had hardly been dealt when Cromwell turned to deal with the west, the one other quarter where feudalism still retained its vigour. The two houses of the Courtenays and the Poles, linked to each other by close intermarriages, stood first in descent among the English nobles. Margaret Plantagenet, the Countess of Salisbury, a daughter of the Duke of Clarence by the heiress of the Earl of Warwick, was at once representative of the Nevilles and a niece of Edward the Fourth. Her third son, Reginald Pole, after refusing the highest offers from Henry as the price of his approval of the divorce, had taken refuge in Rome, where he had been raised to the Cardinalate. He was now preparing an attack on the King in his book "On the Unity of the Church." "There may be found ways enough in Italy," Cromwell wrote to him in significant words, "to rid a treacherous subject. When Justice can take no peace by process of law at home, sometimes she may be enforced to take new means abroad." But he had left hostages in Henry's hands. "Pity that the folly of one witless fool should be the ruin of so great a family. Let him follow ambition as fast as he can, these that little have offended (saving that he is of their kin) were it not for the great mercy and benignity of the prince, should and might feel what it is to have such a traitor to their kinsman." Pole answered by the publication of his book, and by an appeal to the Emperor to execute the Bull of Deposition which was now launched by the Papacy. 1538. Cromwell was quick with his reply. Courtenay, the Marquis of Exeter, was a kinsman of the Poles, and like them of royal blood, a grandson through his mother of Edward the Fourth. His influence over the west was second only to the hold which the Duke of Norfolk had upon the eastern counties. His discontent at Cromwell's system broke out in words of defiance. "Knaves rule about the King," Exeter is reported to have said, "I trust to give them a buffet one day." He was at once arrested with Lord Montague, Pole's elder brother, as accomplices of the Cardinal, and both were beheaded on Tower Hill. After a brief interval the grey hairs of Lady Salisbury lay dabbled with blood upon the same fatal block.



Digitized by Google

# CHAPTER VII.

## THE REFORMATION.

### Section. I.—The Protestants. 1540—1553.

[*Authorities.*—The main authority for the History of the early Protestants, as of the Marian persecution, is Foxe's "Book of Martyrs." In spite of endless errors, of Puritan prejudices and deliberate suppressions of the truth (many of which will be found corrected by Dr. Maitland's "Essays on the Reformation,"), its mass of facts and wonderful charm of style will always give a great importance to the work of Foxe. The whole story of the early Protestants has been admirably wrought up by Mr. Froude ("History of England," chap vi.). For the close of Henry's reign and for that of Edward, we have a mass of material in Strype's "Memorials," and his "Life of Cranmer," in Mr. Pocock's edition of "Burnet's History of the Reformation," in Hayward's Life of Edward, and Edward's own Journal, in Holinshed's "Chronicle," and Machyn's "Diary" (Camden Society) which continues through the reign of Mary. Much light has been thrown from the unpublished State Papers on this period by Mr. Froude ("History of England" vols. iv. and v.) whose work after the death of Henry the Eighth becomes of greater historic value.]

---

**Cromwell's policy and its results.**

WITH the death of Lord Exeter and Lady Salisbury the New Monarchy reached the height of its power. The old English liberties lay prostrate at the feet of the King. The Lords were powerless, the House of Commons filled with the creatures of the Court, and degraded into the mere engine of tyranny. Royal proclamations were taking the place of parliamentary legislation, benevolences were encroaching more and more on the right of parliamentary taxation, Justice was prostituted in the ordinary courts to the royal will, while the boundless and arbitrary powers of the Royal Council were gradually superseding the slower processes of the Common Law. The new religious changes had thrown an almost sacred character over the "majesty" of the King. Henry was the Head of the Church. From the primate to the meanest deacon every minister of it derived from him his sole right to exercise spiritual powers. The voice of its preachers was the mere echo of his will. He alone could define orthodoxy or declare heresy. The forms of its worship and belief were changed and rechanged at the royal caprice. Half of its wealth went to swell the royal treasury, and the other half lay at the King's mercy. It was this unpredecented concentration of all power

Digitized by Google

in the hands of a single man that overawed the imagination of Henry's subjects. He was regarded as something high above the laws which govern common men. The voices of statesmen and of priests extolled his wisdom and power as more than human. The Parliament itself rose and bowed to the vacant throne when his name was mentioned. An absolute devotion to his person replaced the old loyalty to the law. When the Primate of the English Church described the chief merit of Cromwell, it was by asserting that he loved the King "no less than he loved God."

It was indeed Cromwell, as we have seen, who, more than any man, had reared this fabric of king-worship; but he had hardly reared it before it began to give way. In three cardinal points the success of his measures brought about the ruin of his policy. One of its most striking features had been his revival of Parliaments. The great assembly which the New Monarchy, from Edward the Fourth to Wolsey, had dreaded and silenced, was boldly called to the front again by Cromwell; and turned into the most formidable weapon of the royal will. The suppression of the mitred Abbots, and a large creation of new peerages in favour of Court favourites and dependants, left the House of Lords yet more helpless against the Crown than of old. The House of Commons was crowded with members nominated by the Royal Council. With such Houses Cromwell had no difficulty in making the nation itself, whether it would or no, an accomplice in the work of absolutism. It was by Parliamentary statutes that the Church was destroyed, and freedom gagged with new treasons and oaths and questionings. It was by bills of attainder promoted in Parliament that the great nobles were brought to the block. But the success of such a system depended wholly on the absolute servility of Parliament to the will of the Crown. On one occasion during Cromwell's own rule a "great debate" had shewn that elements of resistance still survived, elements which we shall see developing rapidly as the terror passes away, and as the power of the Crown declines under the minority of Edward and the unpopularity of Mary. As in the modern instance of Hungary, the part which the Parliament was to play in the period which followed Cromwell's fall shows the importance of clinging to the forms of constitutional freedom, even when their life seems lost. In the inevitable reaction against tyranny they afford centres for the reviving energies of the people. It is of hardly less importance that the tide of liberty, when it again returns, is enabled through their preservation to flow quietly and naturally along its traditional channels. And to this revival of a spirit of independence Henry largely contributed in the spoliation of the Church and the dissolution of the monasteries. Partly from necessity, partly from a desire to create a large party interested in the maintenance of their ecclesiastical policy, Cromwell and the King squandered the vast mass

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
THE PROTESTANTS.
1540-1553.

of wealth which flowed into the Treasury with reckless prodigality. Something like a fifth of the actual land in the kingdom was in this way transferred from the holding of the Church to that of nobles and gentry. Not only were the older houses enriched, but a new aristocracy was erected from among the dependants of the Court. The Russells, Cavendishes, and Fitzwilliams are familiar instances of families which rose from obscurity through the enormous grants of Church-land made to Henry's courtiers. The old baronage was hardly crushed before a new aristocracy took its place. "Those families within or without the bounds of the peerage," observes Mr. Hallam, "who are now deemed the most considerable, will be found, with no great number of exceptions, to have first become conspicuous under the Tudor line of kings, and if we could trace the title of their estates, to have acquired no small portion of them mediately or immediately from monastic or other ecclesiastical foundations." The leading part which the new peers took in the events which followed Henry's death gave a fresh strength and vigour to the whole order. But the smaller gentry shared in the general enrichment of the landed proprietors, and the new energy of the Lords was soon followed by a display of fresh political independence among the Commons themselves.

**The Protestants.**

But it was above all in the new energy, which the religious spirit of the people at large drew from the ecclesiastical changes which he had brought about, that the policy of Cromwell was fatal to the New Monarchy. Lollardism, as a great social and popular movement, had ceased with the suppression of Cobham's revolt, and little remained of the directly religious impulse given by Wyclif beyond a vague restlessness and discontent with the system of the Church. But weak and fitful as was the life of Lollardism, the prosecutions whose records lie so profusely scattered over the bishop's registers failed wholly to kill it. We see groups meeting here and there to read "in a great book of heresy all one night certain chapters of the Evangelists in English," while transcripts of Wyclif's tracts passed from hand to hand. The smouldering embers needed but a breath to fan them into flame, and the breath came from William Tyndale. A young scholar from Oxford, he was drawn from his retirement in Gloucestershire by the news of Luther's protest at Wittenberg, and after a brief stay in London we find him on his way to the little town which had suddenly became the sacred city of the Reformation. Students of all nations were flocking there with an enthusiasm which resembled that of the Crusades. "As they came in sight of the town," a contemporary tells us, "they returned thanks to God with clasped hands, for from Wittenberg as heretofore from Jerusalem the light of
1535. evangelical truth hath spread to the utmost parts of the earth." It was at Luther's instance that Tyndale translated there the Gospels and Epistles; and the press which he established at Antwerp, where he

Digitized by Google

was joined by a few scholars from Cambridge, was soon busy with his versions of the Scriptures, and with reprints of the tracts of Wyclif and of Luther. These were smuggled over to England and circulated among the poorer and trading classes through the agency of an association of "Christian Brethren," consisting principally of London tradesmen and citizens, but whose missionaries spread over the country at large. They found their way at once to the Universities, where the intellectual impulse given by the New Learning was quickening religious speculation. Cambridge had already won a name for heresy, and the Cambridge scholars whom Wolsey introduced into Cardinal College spread the contagion through Oxford. Tyndale himself was an instance of their influence. The group of "Brethren" which was formed in Cardinal College for the secret reading and discussion of the Epistles soon included the more intelligent and learned scholars of the University. It was in vain that Clark, the centre of this group, strove to dissuade fresh members from joining it by warnings of the impending dangers. "I fell down on my knees at his feet," says one of them, Anthony Dalaber, "and with tears and sighs besought him that for the tender mercy of God he should not refuse me, saying that I trusted verily that He who had begun this on me would not forsake me, but would give me grace to continue therein to the end. When he heard me say so he came to me, took me in his arms, and kissed me, saying, 'The Lord God Almighty grant you so to do, and from henceforth ever take me for your father, and I will take you for my son in Christ.'" The rapid diffusion of Tyndale's works, and their vehement attacks on the bishops and the Church, roused Wolsey at last to action. At Oxford the "Brethren" were thrown into prison and their books seized; in London a pile of Testaments was burned in St. Paul's Churchyard, and a few heretics recanted before the Cardinal in its nave. But in spite of the panic of the Protestants, who fled in crowds over sea, little severity was really exercised; and it was not till Wolsey's fall that forbearance was thrown aside.

1527.

**Latimer.**

The anxiety both of the Cardinal and the King lest in the outburst against heresy the reformers of the New Learning should suffer harm, was remarkably shown in the protection they extended to one who was destined to eclipse even the fame of Colet as a popular preacher. Hugh Latimer was the son of a Leicestershire yeoman, whose armour the boy had buckled on ere he set out to meet the Cornish insurgents at Blackheath field. He has himself described the soldierly training of his youth. "My father was delighted to teach me to shoot with the bow. He taught me how to draw, how to lay my body to the bow, not to draw with strength of arm as other nations do but with the strength of the body." At fourteen he was at Cambridge, flinging himself into the New Learning which was winning its way there, with a zeal which at last led him to study in Italy itself. The ardour of his

*b.* 1490.

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
THE PROTESTANTS.
1540-1553.

mental efforts left its mark on him in ailments and enfeebled health, from which, vigorous as he was, his frame never wholly freed itself. But he was destined to be known, not as a scholar, but as a preacher. The sturdy good sense of the man shook off the pedantry of the schools as well as the subtlety of the theologian in his addresses from the pulpit. He had little turn for speculation, and in the religious changes of the day we find him constantly lagging behind his brother reformers. But he had the moral earnestness of a Jewish prophet, and his denunciations of wrong had a prophetic directness and fire. "Have pity on your soul," he cried to Henry, "and think that the day is even at hand when you shall give an account of your office, and of the blood that hath been shed by your sword." His irony was yet more telling than his invective. "I would ask you a strange question," he said once at Paul's Cross to a ring of Bishops, "who is the most diligent prelate in all England, that passeth all the rest in doing of his office? I will tell you. It is the Devil! of all the pack of them that have cure, the Devil shall go for my money; for he ordereth his business. Therefore, you unpreaching prelates, learn of the Devil to be diligent in your office. If you will not learn of God, for shame learn of the Devil." But he is far from limiting himself to invective. His homely humour breaks in with story and apologue; his earnestness is always tempered with good sense; his plain and simple style quickens with a shrewd mother-wit. He talks to his hearers as a man talks to his friends, telling stories such as we have given of his own life at home, or chatting about the changes and chances of the day with a transparent simplicity and truth that raises even his chat into grandeur. His theme is always the actual world about him, and in his homely lessons of loyalty, of industry, of pity for the poor, he touches upon almost every subject, from the plough to the throne. No such preaching had been heard in England before his day, and with the growth of his fame grew the danger of persecution. There were moments when, bold as he was, Latimer's heart failed him. "If I had not trust that God will help me," he wrote once, "I think the ocean sea would have divided my lord of London and me by this day." A citation for heresy at last brought the danger home. "I intend," he wrote with his peculiar medley of humour and pathos, "to make merry with my parishioners this Christmas, for all the sorrow, lest perchance I may never return to them again." But he was saved throughout by the steady protection of the Court. Wolsey upheld him against the threats of the Bishop of Ely; Henry made him his own chaplain; and the King's interposition at this critical moment forced Latimer's judges to content themselves with a few vague words of submission.

Henry's quarrel with Rome soon snatched the Protestants from the keener persecution which troubled them after Wolsey's fall. The

Digitized by Google

divorce, the renunciation of the Papacy, the degradation of the clergy, the suppression of the monasteries, the religious changes, fell like a series of heavy blows upon the priesthood. From persecutors they suddenly sank into men trembling for their very lives. Those whom they had threatened were placed at their head. Shaxton, a favourer of the new changes, was raised to the see of Salisbury; Barlow, a yet more extreme partizan, to that of St. David's. Latimer himself became Bishop of Worcester, and in a vehement address to the clergy in Convocation taunted them with their greed and superstition in the past, and with their inactivity when the King and his Parliament were labouring for the revival of religion. The aim of Cromwell, as we have seen, was simply that of the New Learning; he desired religious reform rather than revolution, a simplification rather than change of doctrine, the purification of worship rather than the introduction of a new ritual. But it was impossible for him to strike blow after blow at the Church without leaning instinctively to the party who sympathized with the German reformation, and were longing for a more radical change at home. The Protestants, as these were called, appealed to him against the Bishops' Courts, and looked for their security to the "rattling letters" from the Vicar-General, which damped the zeal of their opponents. Few as they still were in numbers, their new hopes made them a formidable force; and in the school of persecution they had learnt a violence which delighted in outrages on the faith which had so long trampled them under foot. At the very outset of Cromwell's changes four Suffolk boys broke into the church at Doverscourt, tore down a wonder-working crucifix, and burned it in the fields. The suppression of the lesser monasteries was the signal for a new outburst of ribald insult to the old religion. The roughness, insolence, and extortion of the Commissioners sent to effect it drove the whole monastic body to despair. Their servants rode along the road with copes for doublets, and tunicles for saddle-cloths, and scattered panic among the larger houses which were left. Some sold their jewels and relics to provide for the evil day they saw approaching. Some begged of their own will for dissolution. It was worse when fresh ordinances of the Vicar-General ordered the removal of objects of superstitious veneration. The removal, bitter enough to those whose religion twined itself around the image or the relic which was taken away, was yet more embittered by the insults with which it was accompanied. The miraculous rood at Boxley, which bowed its head and stirred its eyes, was paraded from market to market and exhibited as a juggle before the Court. Images of the Virgin were stripped of their costly vestments and sent to be publicly burnt at London. Latimer forwarded to the capital the figure of Our Lady, which he had thrust out of his cathedral church at Worcester, with rough words of scorn: "She,

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
THE PROTESTANTS.
1540-1553.

with her old sister of Walsingham, her younger sister of Ipswich, and their two other sisters of Doncaster and Penrice, would make a jolly muster at Smithfield." Fresh orders were given to fling all relics from their reliquaries, and to level every shrine with the ground. The bones of St. Thomas of Canterbury were torn from the stately shrine which had been the glory of his metropolitan church, and his name erased from the service books as that of a traitor. The introduction of the English Bible into churches gave a new opening for the zeal of the Protestants. In spite of Royal injunctions that it should be read decently and without comment, the young zealots of the party prided themselves on shouting it out to a circle of excited hearers during the service of mass, and accompanied their reading with violent expositions. Protestant maidens took the new English primer to church with them, and studied it ostentatiously during matins. Insult passed into open violence when the Bishops' Courts were invaded and broken up by Protestant mobs; and law and public opinion were outraged at once, when priests who favoured the new doctrines began openly to bring home wives to their vicarages. A fiery outburst of popular discussion compensated for the silence of the pulpits. The new Scriptures, in Henry's bitter words of complaint, were "disputed, rhymed, sung, and jangled in every tavern and alehouse." The articles which dictated the belief of the English Church roused a furious controversy. Above all, the Sacrament of the Mass, the centre of the Catholic system of faith and worship, and which still remained sacred to the bulk of Englishmen, was attacked with a scurrility and profaneness which passes belief. The doctrine of Transubstantiation, which was as yet recognised by law, was held up to scorn in ballads and mystery plays. In one church a Protestant lawyer raised a dog in his hands when the priest elevated the Host. The most sacred words of the old worship, the words of consecration, "Hoc est corpus," were travestied into a nickname for jugglery, as "Hocus-pocus." It was by this attack on the Mass, even more than by the other outrages, that the temper both of Henry and the nation was stirred to a deep resent-
1539. ment; and the first signs of reaction were seen in the Law of the Six Articles, which was passed by the Parliament with almost universal assent. On the doctrine of Transubstantiation, which was re-asserted by the first of these, there was no difference of feeling or belief between the men of the New Learning and the older Catholics. But the road to a further instalment of even moderate reform seemed closed by the five other articles which sanctioned communion in one kind, the celibacy of the clergy, monastic vows, private masses, and auricular confession. A more terrible feature of the reaction was the revival of persecution. Burning was denounced as the penalty for a denial of transubstantiation; it was only on a second offence that it became the penalty for an infraction of the other five doctrines. A refusal to

Digitized by Google

confess or to attend Mass was made felony. It was in vain that Cranmer, with the five bishops who partially sympathized with the Protestants, struggled against the bill in the Lords: the Commons were "all of one opinion," and Henry himself acted as spokesman on the side of the Articles. But, zealous as he was for order, Henry was still true in heart to the cause of a moderate reform; and Cromwell, though he had bent to the storm, was quick to profit by the vehemence of the Catholic reaction. In London alone five hundred Protestants were indicted under the new act. Latimer and Shaxton were imprisoned, and the former forced into a resignation of his see. Cranmer himself was only saved by Henry's personal favour. But the first burst of triumph had no sooner spent itself than the strong hand of Cromwell was again felt by the Catholic zealots. The bishops were quietly released. The London indictments were quashed. The magistrates were roughly checked in their enforcement of the law, while a general pardon cleared the prisons of the heretics who had been arrested under its provisions. A few months after its enactment we find, from a Protestant letter, that persecution had wholly ceased, "the Word is powerfully preached and books of every kind may safely be exposed for sale."

**The Fall of Cromwell.**

Never indeed had Cromwell shown such greatness as in his last struggle against Fate. "Beknaved" by the King whose confidence in him was hourly waning, and met by a growing opposition in the Council as his favour declined, the temper of the man remained indomitable as ever. He stood absolutely alone. Wolsey, hated as he had been by the nobles, had been supported by the Church; but Churchmen hated Cromwell with an even fiercer hate than the nobles themselves. His only friends were the Protestants, and their friendship was more fatal than the hatred of his foes. But he shewed no signs of fear or of halting in the course he had entered on. His activity was as boundless as ever. Like Wolsey he had concentrated in his hands the whole administration of the state; he was at once foreign minister and home minister and Vicar-General of the Church, the creator of a new fleet, the organizer of armies, the president of the terrible Star Chamber. But his Italian indifference to the mere show of power contrasted strongly with the pomp of the Cardinal. His personal habits were simple and unostentatious. If he clutched at money it was to feed the vast army of spies whom he maintained at his own expense, and whose work he surveyed with a sleepless vigilance. More than fifty volumes still remain of the gigantic mass of his correspondence. Thousands of letters from "poor bedesmen," from outraged wives and wronged labourers and persecuted heretics, flowed in to the all-powerful minister, whose system of personal government had turned him into the universal court of appeal. So long as Henry supported him, however reluctantly, he was more than a match, even single-handed, for his foes. He met

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
THE PROTESTANTS.
1540-1553.

the hostility of the nobles with a threat which marked his power. "If the Lords would handle him so, he would give them such a breakfast as never was made in England, and that the proudest of them should know." He was strong enough to expel the Bishop of Winchester, Gardiner, who had become his chief opponent, from the Royal Council. His single will forced on a scheme of foreign policy, whose aim was to bind England to the cause of the Reformation, while it bound Henry helplessly to his minister. The daring boast which his enemies laid afterwards to his charge, whether uttered or not, is but the expression of his policy. "In brief time he would bring things to such a pass that the King with all his power should not be able to hinder him." His plans rested, like the plan which proved fatal to Wolsey, on a fresh marriage of his master. The short lived royalty of Anne Boleyn had ended in charges of adultery and treason, and in her death on Tower Hill. Her rival and successor in Henry's affections, Jane Seymour, had just died in child-birth; and Cromwell replaced her with a German consort, Anne of Cleves, the sister-in-law of the Lutheran elector of Saxony. He dared even to resist Henry's caprice, when the King revolted on their first interview at the coarse features and unwieldy form of his new bride. For the moment Cromwell had brought matters "to such a pass" that it was impossible to recoil from the marriage. But the marriage of Anne of
1543. Cleves was but the first step in a policy which, had it been carried out as he designed it, would have anticipated the triumphs of Richelieu. Charles and the House of Austria could alone bring about a Catholic reaction strong enough to arrest and roll back the Reformation; and Cromwell was no sooner united with the princes of North Germany than he sought to league them with France for the overthrow of the Emperor. Had he succeeded, the whole face of Europe would have been changed, Southern Germany would have been secured for Protestantism, and the Thirty Years War averted. He failed as men fail who stand ahead of their age. The German princes shrunk from a contest with the Emperor, France from a struggle which would be fatal to Catholicism; and Henry, left alone to bear the resentment of the House of Austria, and chained to a wife he loathed, turned savagely on Cromwell. The nobles sprang on him with a fierceness that told of their long-hoarded hate. Taunts and execrations burst from the Lords at the Council table, as the Duke of Norfolk, who had been charged with the minister's arrest, tore the ensign of the Garter insolently from his neck. At the charge of treason Cromwell flung his cap on the ground with a passionate cry of despair. "This then," he exclaimed, "is my guerdon for the services I have done! On your consciences, I ask you, am I a traitor?" Then with a sudden sense that all was over he bade his foes "make quick work, and not leave me to languish in prison."

Digitized by Google

Quick work was made, and a yet louder burst of popular applause than that which hailed the attainder of Cromwell, hailed his execution. For the moment his designs seemed to be utterly abandoned. The marriage with Anne of Cleves was annulled, and a new Queen found in Catherine Howard, a girl of the house of Norfolk. Norfolk himself, who stood, as before Cromwell's rise, at the head of affairs, resumed the policy which Cromwell had interrupted. With the older nobles generally, he still clung to the dream of the New Learning, to a purification of the Church through a general Council, and to the reconciliation of England with the purified body of Catholicism. For such a purpose it was necessary to vindicate English orthodoxy; and to ally England with the Emperor, by whose influence alone the assembly of such a Council could be brought about. Norfolk and his master remained true to the principles of the earlier reform. The reading of the Bible was still permitted, though its disorderly expositions were put down. The publication of an English Litany furnished the germ of the national Prayer Book of a later time. The greater Abbeys, which had been saved by the energetic resistance of 1539.
the Parliament from Cromwell's grasp, were now involved in the same ruin with the smaller. There was no thought of reviving the old superstitions, or undoing the work which had been done, but simply of guarding the purified faith against Lutheran heresy. It was for this purpose that the Six Articles were once more put in force, and a Committee of State named to guard against the progress of heresy; while the friendship of England was offered to Charles, when the struggle between France and the House of Austria burst again for a time into flame. But, as Cromwell had foreseen, the time for 1543.
a peaceful reform and for a general reunion of Christendom was past. The Council, so passionately desired, met at Trent in no spirit of conciliation, but to ratify the very superstitions and errors against which the New Learning had protested, and which England and Germany had flung away. The long hostility of France and the House of Austria merged in the greater struggle which was opening between Catholicism and the Reformation. The Emperor, from whom Norfolk looked for a purification of the Church, established the Inquisition in Flanders. As their hopes of a middle course faded, the Catholic nobles themselves drifted unconsciously with the tide of reaction. The persecution of the Protestants took a new vigour. Anne Ascue, a lady of the Court, was tortured and burnt for her denial of Transubstantiation. Latimer was seized; and Cranmer himself, who in the general dissolution of the moderate party was drifting towards Protestantism as Norfolk was drifting towards Rome, was for a moment in danger. But at the last hours of his life Henry proved 1546.
himself true to the work he had begun. His resolve not to return to the obedience of Rome threw him, whether he would or no, back on

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.

THE PROTESTANTS.
1540-1553.

1547.

the policy of the great minister whom he had hurried to the block. He offered to unite in a "League Christian" with the German Princes. He suddenly consented to the change, suggested by Cranmer, of the Mass into a Communion Service. He flung the Duke of Norfolk into the Tower as a traitor, sent his son, the Earl of Surrey, to the block, and placed the Earl of Hertford, who was known as a patron of the Protestants, at the head of the Council of Regency which he nominated at his death.

Somerset.

Catherine Howard atoned like Anne Boleyn for her unchastity by a traitor's death; her successor on the throne, Catherine Parr, had the luck to outlive the King. But of Henry's numerous marriages only three children survived; Mary and Elizabeth, the daughters of Catherine of Arragon and of Anne Boleyn, and Edward, the boy who now ascended the throne as Edward the Sixth, his son by Jane Seymour. The will of Henry had placed Jane's brother, whom he had raised to the peerage as Lord Hertford, and who at a later time assumed the title of Duke of Somerset, at the head of a Council of Regency in which the adherents of the old and new system were carefully balanced; but his first act was to expel the former from the Council, and to seize the whole Royal power with the title of Protector. Hertford's personal weakness forced him at once to seek for popular support by measures which marked the first retreat of the New Monarchy from the position of pure absolutism which it had reached under Henry. A fatal Statute, which at the close of the late reign had given to Royal proclamations the force of law, was repealed. The new felonies and treasons, which Cromwell had created and used with so terrible an effect, were erased from the Statute Book. The hope of support from the Protestants united with Hertford's personal predilections in his patronage of the innovations against which Henry had battled to the last. Cranmer, as we have seen, had drifted into a purely Protestant position; and his open break with the older system followed quickly on Hertford's rise to power. "This year," says a contemporary, "the Archbishop of Canterbury did eat meat openly in Lent in the Hall of Lambeth, the like of which was never seen since England was a Christian country." This significant act was followed by a rapid succession of sweeping changes. The legal prohibitions of Lollardry were removed; the Six Articles were repealed; a Royal injunction removed all pictures and images from the churches; priests were permitted to marry; the new Communion which had taken the place of the Mass was ordered to be administered in both kinds, and in the English tongue; an English book of Common Prayer, the Liturgy, which with slight alterations is still used in the Church of England, replaced the Missal and Breviary from which its contents are mainly drawn; a new Catechism embodied the doctrines of Cranmer and his friends;

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.

THE PROTESTANTS.

1540-1553.

and a Book of Homilies compiled in the same sense was appointed to be read in churches. These sweeping religious changes were carried through with the despotism, if not with the vigour, of Cromwell. Gardiner, who in his servile acceptance of the personal supremacy of the sovereign denounced all ecclesiastical changes made during the King's minority as illegal and invalid, was sent to the Tower. The power of preaching was restricted by the issue of licences only to the friends of the Primate. While all counter arguments were rigidly suppressed, a crowd of Protestant pamphleteers flooded the country with vehement invectives against the Mass and its superstitious accompaniments. The assent of the nobles about the court was won by the suppression of chauntries and religious gilds, and by glutting their greed with the last spoils of the Church. German and Italian mercenaries were introduced to stamp out the wider popular discontent which broke out in the east, in the west, and in the midland counties. The Cornishmen refused to receive the new service "because it is like a Christmas game." Devonshire demanded in open revolt the restoration of the Mass and the Six Articles. The agrarian discontent woke again in the general disorder. Twenty thousand men gathered round the "oak of Reformation" near Norwich, and repulsing the Royal troops in a desperate engagement, renewed the old cries for a removal of evil counsellors, a prohibition of enclosures, and redress for the grievances of the poor.

1548.

1549

Revolt was everywhere stamped out in blood; but the weakness which the Protector had shown in presence of the danger, and the irritation caused by the sanction he had given to the agrarian demands of the insurgents, ended in his fall. He was forced by his own party to resign, and his power passed to the Earl of Warwick, to whose ruthless severity the suppression of the revolt was mainly due. The change of governors, however, brought about no change of system. The rule of the upstart nobles who formed the Council of Regency became simply a rule of terror. "The greater part of the people," one of their creatures, Cecil, avowed, "is not in favour of defending this cause, but of aiding its adversaries, the greater part of the nobles who absent themselves from Court, all the bishops save three or four, almost all the judges and lawyers, almost all the justices of the peace, the priests who can move their flocks any way, for the whole of the commonalty is in such a state of irritation that it will easily follow any stir towards change." But with their triumph over the revolt, Cranmer and his colleagues advanced yet more boldly in the career of innovation. Four prelates who adhered to the older system were deprived of their sees and committed on frivolous pretexts to the Tower. A crowning defiance was given to the doctrine of the Mass by an order to demolish the stone altars, and replace them by wooden tables, which

**The Protestant Mis-rule.**

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
THE PROTESTANTS.
1540-1553.
1552.

were stationed for the most part in the middle of the church. The new Prayer-book was revised, and every change made in it leant directly towards the extreme Protestantism which was at this time finding a home at Geneva. The Forty-two Articles of Religion, which were now introduced, though since reduced by omissions to thirty-nine, have remained to this day the formal standard of doctrine in the English Church. The sufferings of the Protestants had failed to teach them the worth of religious liberty; and a new code of ecclesiastical laws, which was ordered to be drawn up by a board of Commissioners as a substitute for the Canon Law of the Catholic Church, although it shrank from the penalty of death, attached that of perpetual imprisonment or exile to the crimes of heresy, blasphemy, and adultery, and declared excommunication to involve a severance of the offender from the mercy of God, and his deliverance into the tyranny of the devil. Delays in the completion of this Code prevented its legal establishment during Edward's reign (it was quietly dropped by Elizabeth), but the use of the new Liturgy and attendance at the new service was enforced by imprisonment, and subscription to the Articles of Faith was demanded by Royal authority from all clergymen, churchwardens, and schoolmasters. The distaste for changes so hurried, and so rigorously enforced, was increased by the daring speculations of the more extreme Protestants. The real value of the religious revolution of the sixteenth century to mankind lay, not in its substitution of one creed for another, but in the new spirit of inquiry, the new freedom of thought and of discussion, which was awakened during the process of change. But however familiar such a truth may be to us, it was absolutely hidden from the England of the time. Men heard with horror that the foundations of faith and morality were questioned, polygamy advocated, oaths denounced as unlawful, community of goods raised into a sacred obligation, the very Godhead of the Founder of Christianity denied. The repeal of the Statute of Heresy left the powers of the Common Law intact, and Cranmer availed himself of these to send heretics of the last class without mercy to the stake; but within the Church itself the Primate's desire for uniformity was roughly resisted by the more ardent members of his own party. Hooper, who had been named Bishop of Gloucester, refused to wear the episcopal habits, and denounced them as the livery of the "harlot of Babylon," a name for the Papacy which was supposed to have been discovered in the Apocalypse. Ecclesiastical order was almost at an end. Priests flung aside the surplice as superstitious. Patrons of livings presented their huntsmen or game keepers to the benefices in their gift, and pocketed the stipend. All teaching of divinity ceased at the Universities: the students indeed had fallen off in numbers, the libraries were in part scattered or burnt, the intellectual

Digitized by Google

impulse of the New Learning had died away. One noble measure indeed, the foundation of eighteen Grammar Schools, was destined to throw a lustre over the name of Edward, but it had no time to bear fruit in his reign. All that men saw was religious and political chaos, in which ecclesiastical order had perished, and in which politics were dying down into the squabbles of a knot of nobles over the spoils of the Church and the Crown. The plunder of the chauntries and the gilds failed to glut the appetite of the crew of spoilers. Half the lands of every see were flung to them in vain; the see of Durham had been wholly suppressed to satisfy their greed; and the whole endowments of the Church were now threatened with confiscation. But while the courtiers gorged themselves with manors, the Treasury grew poorer. The coinage was debased. Crown lands to the value of five millions of our modern money had been granted away to the friends of Somerset and Warwick. The Royal expenditure had mounted in seventeen years to more than four times its previous total. It is clear that England must soon have risen against the misrule of the Protectorate, if the Protectorate had not fallen by the intestine divisions of the plunderers themselves.

## Section II.—The Martyrs. 1553—1558.

[*Authorities.*—As before.]

Mary.

The waning health of Edward warned Warwick, who had now become Duke of Northumberland, of an unlooked-for danger. Mary, the daughter of Catherine of Aragon, who had been placed next in the succession to Edward by her father's will, remained firm amidst all the changes of the time to the older faith; and her accession threatened to be the signal for its return. But the bigotry of the young King was easily brought to consent to a daring scheme by which her rights might be set aside. Edward's "plan," as Northumberland dictated it, annulled the will of his father; though the right of determining the succession had been entrusted to Henry by a Statute of the Realm. It set aside both Mary and Elizabeth, who stood next in the will, as bastards. With this exclusion of the direct line of Henry the Eighth the succession would vest, if the rules of hereditary descent were observed, in the descendants of his elder sister Margaret; who had become by her first husband, James the Fourth of Scotland, the grandmother of the young Scottish Queen, Mary Stuart; and, by a second marriage with the Earl of Angus, was the grandmother of Henry Lennox, Lord Darnley. Margaret's descendants, however, were regarded as incapacitated by their exclusion from mention in Henry's will. The descendants of her sister Mary, the younger



Digitized by Google

SEC. II. THE MARTYRS. 1553-1558.

daughter of Henry the Seventh, by her marriage with Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, had been placed by the late King next in succession to his own children: and Mary's child Frances was still living, the mother of three daughters by her marriage with Lord Grey, who had been raised to the Dukedom of Suffolk. Frances however was passed over, and Edward's "plan" named her eldest child Jane as his successor. The marriage of Jane Grey with Guildford Dudley, the fourth son of Northumberland, was all that was needed to complete the unscrupulous plot. The consent of the judges and council to her succession was extorted by the violence of the Duke, and the new sovereign was proclaimed on Edward's death. But the temper of the whole people rebelled against so lawless a usurpation. The eastern counties rose as one man to support Mary; and when Northumberland marched from London with ten thousand at his back to crush the rising, the Londoners, Protestant as they were, showed their ill-will by a stubborn silence. "The people crowd to look upon us," the Duke noted gloomily, "but not one calls 'God speed ye.'" His courage suddenly gave way, and his retreat to Cambridge was the signal for a general defection. Northumberland himself threw his cap into the air and shouted with his men for Queen Mary. But his submission failed to avert his doom; and the death of Northumberland drew with it the imprisonment in the Tower of the innocent and hapless girl, whom he had made the tool of his ambition. The whole system which had been pursued during Edward's reign fell with a sudden crash. London alone remained true to Protestantism. Over all the rest of the country the tide of reaction swept without a check. The married priests were driven from their churches; the new Prayer-book was set aside; the Mass was restored with a burst of popular enthusiasm. The imprisoned bishops found themselves again in their sees; and Latimer and Cranmer, who were charged with a share in the usurpation, took their places in the Tower. But with the restoration of the system of Henry the Eighth the popular impulse was satisfied. The people had no more sympathy with Mary's leanings towards Rome than with the violence of the Protestants. The Parliament, while eager to restore the Mass and the laws against heresy, clung obstinately to the Church-lands and to the Royal Supremacy.

1553.

**The Spanish Marriage**

Nor was England more favourable to the marriage on which, from motives both of policy and religious zeal, Mary had set her heart. The Emperor had ceased to be the object of hope or confidence as a mediator who would at once purify the Church from abuses and restore the unity of Christendom: he had ranged himself definitely on the side of the Papacy and of the Council of Trent; and the cruelties of the Inquisition, which he introduced into Flanders, gave a terrible indication of the bigotry which he was to bequeath to his house. The marriage with his son Philip, whose hand he offered to his cousin

Digitized by Google

Mary, meant an absolute submission to the Papacy, and the undoing not only of the Protestant reformation, but of the more moderate reforms of the New Learning. On the other hand, it offered the political advantage of securing Mary's throne against the pretensions of the young Queen of Scots, Mary Stuart, who had become formidable by her marriage with the heir of the French crown; and whose adherents already alleged the illegitimate birth of both Mary and Elizabeth, through the annulling of their mothers' marriages, as a ground for denying their right of succession. To the issue of the marriage he proposed, Charles promised the heritage of the Low Countries, while he accepted the demand made by Mary's minister, Bishop Gardiner of Winchester, of complete independence both of policy and action on the part of England, in case of such a union. The temptation was great, and Mary's passion overleapt all obstacles. But in spite of the toleration which she had promised, and had as yet observed, the announcement of her design drove the Protestants into a panic of despair. The Duke of Suffolk suddenly appeared at Leicester, and proclaimed his daughter Queen; but the rising proved a failure. The danger was far more formidable when the dread that Spaniards were coming "to conquer the realm" roused Kent into revolt under Sir Thomas Wyatt, the bravest and most accomplished Englishman of his day. The ships in the Thames submitted to be seized by the insurgents. The trainbands of London, who marched under the Duke of Norfolk against them, deserted to the rebels in a mass with shouts of "a Wyatt! a Wyatt! we are all Englishmen!" Had the insurgents moved quickly on the capital, its gates would at once have been flung open, and success would have been assured. But in the critical moment Mary was saved by her queenly courage. Riding boldly to the Guildhall she appealed, with "a man's voice," to the loyalty of the citizens, and when Wyatt appeared on the Southwark bank the bridge was secured. The issue hung on the question, which side London would take; and the insurgent leader pushed desperately up the Thames, seized the bridge at Kingston, threw his force across the river, and marched rapidly back on the capital. The night march along miry roads wearied and disorganized his men, the bulk of whom were cut off from their leader by a Royal force which had gathered in the fields at what is now Hyde Park Corner, but Wyatt himself, with a handful of followers, pushed desperately on to Temple Bar. "I have kept touch," he cried as he sank exhausted at the gate; but it was closed, and his adherents within were powerless to effect their promised diversion in his favour.

1554.

The courage of the Queen, who had refused to fly even while the rebels were marching beneath her palace walls, was only equalled by her terrible revenge. The hour was come when the Protestants were at her feet, and she struck without mercy. Lady Jane, her father, and

**The Submission to Rome**



Digitized by Google

SEC. II. THE MARTYRS. 1553-1558.

her uncles atoned for the ambition of the House of Suffolk by the death of traitors. Wyatt and his chief adherents followed them to the block, while the bodies of the poorer insurgents were dangling on gibbets throughout Kent. Elizabeth, who had with some reason been suspected of complicity in the insurrection, was sent to the Tower; and only saved from death by the interposition of the Emperor and of the Council. But the failure of the revolt not only crushed the Protestant party, it secured the marriage on which Mary was resolved. She used it to wring a reluctant consent from the Parliament, and meeting Philip at Winchester in the ensuing summer became his wife. The temporizing measures to which the Queen had been forced by the earlier difficulties of her reign could now be laid safely aside. Mary was resolved to bring about a submission to Rome; and her minister Gardiner, who, as the moderate party which had supported the policy of Henry the Eighth saw its hopes disappear, ranged himself definitely on the side of a unity which could now only be brought about by reconciliation with the Papacy on its own terms, was, if less religiously zealous, politically as resolute as herself. The Spanish match was hardly concluded, when the negotiations with Rome were brought to a final issue. The attainder of Reginald Pole, who had been appointed by the Pope to receive the submission of the realm, was reversed; and the Legate, who entered London by the river with his cross gleaming from the prow of his barge, was solemnly welcomed in full Parliament. The two Houses decided by a formal vote to return to the obedience of the Papal See, and received on their knees the absolution which freed the realm from the guilt incurred by its schism and heresy. But, even in the hour of her triumph, the temper both of Parliament and the nation warned the Queen of the failure of her hope to bind England to the purely Catholic policy of Spain. The growing independence of the two Houses was seen in their rejection of measure after measure proposed by the Crown. In spite of Mary's hatred of Elizabeth, they refused to change the order of succession in favour of Philip. Though their great Bill of Reconciliation repealed the whole ecclesiastical legislation of Henry the Eighth and his successor, they rejected all proposals for the restoration of Church-lands to the clergy. It was to no purpose that the old statute for the burning of heretics, together with a bill for the restoration of the jurisdiction of the bishops, was again introduced into Parliament. Nor was the temper of the nation at large less decided. The sullen discontent of London compelled its bishop, Bonner, to withdraw the inquisitorial articles by which he hoped to purge his diocese of heresy. Even the Royal Council was divided, and in the very interests of Catholicism the Emperor himself counselled prudence and delay. But whether from without or from within, warning was wasted on the fierce bigotry of the Queen.

Digitized by Google

It was a moment when the prospects of the party of reform seemed utterly hopeless. Spain had taken openly the lead in the great Catholic movement, and England was being dragged, however reluctantly, by the Spanish marriage into the current of reaction. Its opponents were broken by the failure of their revolt, and unpopular through the memory of their violence and greed. But the cause which prosperity had ruined revived in the dark hour of persecution. If the Protestants had not known how to govern, they knew how to die. The story of Rowland Taylor, the Vicar of Hadleigh, tells us more of the work which was now begun, and of the effect it was likely to produce, than pages of historic dissertation. Although Parliament had refused to enact the Statute of Heresy, it was still possible to fall back on the powers of the Common Law; and Gardiner, at the head of the Council, pressed busily on the work of death. Taylor, who as a man of mark had been one of the first victims chosen for execution, was arrested in London and condemned to suffer in his own parish. His wife, "suspecting that her husband should that night be carried away," had waited through the darkness with her children in the porch of St. Botolph's beside Aldgate. "Now when the sheriff his company came against St. Botolph's Church, Elizabeth cried, saying, 'O my dear father! Mother! mother! here is my father led away!' Then cried his wife, 'Rowland, Rowland, where art thou?'—for it was a very dark morning, that the one could not see the other. Dr. Taylor answered, 'I am here, dear wife,' and stayed. The sheriff's men would have led him forth, but the sheriff said, 'Stay a little, masters, I pray you, and let him speak to his wife.' Then came she to him, and he took his daughter Mary in his arms, and he and his wife and Elizabeth knelt down and said the Lord's prayer. At which sight the sheriff wept apace, and so did divers others of the company. After they had prayed he rose up and kissed his wife and shook her by the hand, and said, 'Farewell, my dear wife, be of good comfort, for I am quiet in my conscience! God shall still be a father to my children.' . . . Then said his wife, 'God be with thee, dear Rowland! I will, with God's grace, meet thee at Hadleigh.' . . . All the way Dr. Taylor was merry and cheerful as one that accounted himself going to a most pleasant banquet or bridal. . . . Coming within two miles of Hadleigh he desired to light off his horse, which done he leaped and set a frisk or twain as men commonly do for dancing. 'Why, master Doctor,' quoth the Sheriff, 'how do you now?' He answered, 'Well, God be praised, Master Sheriff, never better; for now I know I am almost at home. I lack not past two stiles to go over, and I am even at my Father's house!' . . . The streets of Hadleigh were beset on both sides with men and women of the town and country who waited to see him; whom when they beheld so led to death, with weeping eyes and lamentable voices, they cried,

**Rowland Taylor.** 1555.

Digitized by Google

SEC. II.
THE MARTYRS.
1553-1558.

'Ah, good Lord! there goeth our good shepherd from us!'" The journey was at last over. "'What place is this,' he asked, 'and what meaneth it that so much people are gathered together?' It was answered, 'It is Oldham Common, the place where you must suffer, and the people are come to look upon you.' Then said he, 'Thanked be God, I am even at home!' .... But when the people saw his reverend and ancient face, with a long white beard, they burst out with weeping tears and cried, saying 'God save thee, good Dr. Taylor; God strengthen thee and help thee; the Holy Ghost comfort thee!' He wished, but was not suffered, to speak. When he had prayed, he went to the stake and kissed it, and set himself into a pitch-barrel which they had set for him to stand on, and so stood with his back upright against the stake, with his hands folded together and his eyes towards heaven, and so let himself be burned." One of the executioners "cruelly cast a fagot at him, which hit upon his head and brake his face that the blood ran down his visage. Then said Dr. Taylor, 'O friend, I have harm enough—what needed that?'" One more act of brutality brought his sufferings to an end.—"So stood he still without either crying or moving, with his hands folded together, till Soyce with a halberd struck him on the head that the brains fell out, and the dead corpse fell down into the fire."

**The Martyrs.**

The terror of death was powerless against men like these. Bonner, the Bishop of London, to whom, as bishop of the diocese in which the Council sate, its victims were generally delivered for execution, but who, in spite of the nickname and hatred which his official prominence in the work of death earned him, seems to have been naturally a good-humoured and merciful man, asked a youth who was brought before him whether he thought he could bear the fire. The boy at once held his hand without flinching in the flame of a candle which stood by. Rogers, a fellow-worker with Tyndale in the translation of the Bible, and one of the foremost among the Protestant preachers, died bathing his hands in the flame "as if it had been in cold water." Even the commonest lives gleamed for a moment into poetry at the stake. "Pray for me," a boy, William Brown, who had been brought home to Brentwood to suffer, asked of the bystanders round. "I will pray no more for thee," one of them replied, "than I will pray for a dog." "'Then,' said William, 'Son of God, shine upon me;' and immediately the sun in the elements shone out of a dark cloud so full in his face that he was constrained to look another way; whereat the people mused, because it was so dark a little time before." The work of terror failed in the very ends for which it was wrought. The panic, which had driven a host of Protestants over sea to find refuge at Strasburg or Geneva, soon passed away. The old spirit of insolent defiance, of outrageous violence, was roused again at the challenge of persecution. A Protestant hung a

Digitized by Google

string of puddings round a priest's neck in derision of his beads. The restored images were grossly insulted. The old scurrilous ballads were heard again in the streets. One miserable wretch, driven to frenzy, stabbed the priest of St. Margaret's as he stood with the chalice in his hand. It was a more formidable sign of the times that acts of violence such as these no longer stirred the people at large to their former resentment. The horror of the persecution left no room for other feelings. Every death at the stake won hundreds to the cause of its victims. "You have lost the hearts of twenty thousands that were rank Papists," ran a letter to Bonner, "within these twelve months." Bonner indeed, never very zealous in the cause, was sick of his work. Gardiner was dead, and the energy of the bishops quietly relaxed. But Mary had no thought of hesitation in the cause she had begun. "Rattling letters" from the Queen roused the lagging prelates to fresh persecution, and in three months fifty victims were hurried to their doom. It was resolved to bring the chiefs of the Protestant party to the stake. Two prelates had already perished; Hooper, the Bishop of Glocester, had been burnt in his own Cathedral city; Ferrars, the Bishop of St. David's, had suffered at Caermarthen. Latimer and Bishop Ridley of London were now drawn from their prisons at Oxford. "Play the man, Master Ridley," cried the old preacher of the Reformation as the flames shot up around him; "we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England as I trust shall never be put out." One victim remained, far beneath many who had preceded him in character, but high above them in his position in the Church of England. The other prelates who had suffered had been created after the separation from Rome, and were hardly regarded as bishops by their opponents. But, whatever had been his part in the schism, Cranmer had received his Pallium from the Pope. He was, in the eyes of all, Archbishop of Canterbury, the successor of St. Augustine and of St. Thomas in the second see of Western Christendom. To burn the Primate of the English Church for heresy was to shut out meaner victims from all hope of escape. But revenge and religious zeal alike urged Mary to bring Cranmer to the stake. First among the many decisions in which the Archbishop had prostituted justice to Henry's will stood that by which he had annulled the King's marriage with Catherine and declared Mary a bastard. The last of his political acts had been to join, whether reluctantly or no, in the shameless plot to exclude Mary from the throne. His great position, too, made him more than any man the representative of the religious revolution which had passed over the land. His figure stood with those of Henry and of Cromwell on the frontispiece of the English Bible. The decisive change which had been given to the character of the Reformation under Edward was due wholly to

Digitized by Google

SEC. II.
THE MARTYRS.
1553
1558.

Cranmer. It was his voice that men heard and still hear in the accents of the English Liturgy, which he compiled in the quiet retirement of Otford. As an Archbishop, Cranmer's judgment rested with no meaner tribunal than that of Rome, and his execution was necessarily delayed. But the courage which he had shown since the accession of Mary gave way the moment his final sentence was announced. The moral cowardice, which had displayed itself in his miserable compliance with the lust and despotism of Henry, displayed itself again in the six recantations by which he hoped to purchase pardon. But pardon was impossible; and Cranmer's strangely mingled nature found a power in its very weakness when he was brought into the church of St. Mary to repeat his recantation on the way to the stake. "Now," ended his address to the hushed congregation before him, "now I come to the great thing that troubleth my conscience more than any other thing that ever I said or did in my life, and that is the setting abroad of writings contrary to the truth; which here I now renounce and refuse as things written by my hand contrary to the truth which I thought in my heart, and written for fear of death to save my life, if it might be. And, forasmuch as my hand offended in writing contrary to my heart, my hand therefore shall be the first punished; for if I come to the fire, it shall be the first burnt." "This was the hand that wrote it," he again exclaimed at the stake, "therefore it shall suffer first punishment;" and holding it steadily in the flame "he never stirred nor cried" till life was gone.

1556.

**The Death of Mary.**

It was with the unerring instinct of a popular movement that, among a crowd of far more heroic sufferers, the Protestants fixed, in spite of his recantations, on the martyrdom of Cranmer as the death-blow to Catholicism in England. For one man who felt within him the joy of Rowland Taylor at the prospect of the stake, there were thousands who felt the shuddering dread of Cranmer. The triumphant cry of Latimer could reach only hearts as bold as his own; but the sad pathos of the Primate's humiliation and repentance struck chords of sympathy and pity in the hearts of all. It is from that moment that we may trace the bitter remembrance of the blood shed in the cause of Rome; which, however partial and unjust it must seem to an historic observer, still lies graven deep in the temper of the English people. The failure of any attempt to make England really useful to the Catholic cause became clear even to the bigoted Philip; and on the disappearance of all hope of a child, he left the country, in spite of Mary's passionate entreaties, never to return. But the wretched Queen struggled desperately on. In the face of the Parliament's refusal to restore the confiscated Church-lands, she did her best to undo Henry's work. She refounded all she could of the abbeys which had been suppressed. She refused the first-fruits of the clergy. Above all, she pressed on the work of persecution. It had sunk now from bishops

Digitized by Google

and priests to the people itself. The sufferers were sent in batches to the flames. In a single day thirteen victims, two of them women, were burnt at Stratford-le-Bow. Seventy-three Protestants of Colchester were dragged through the streets of London, tied to a single rope. A new commission for the suppression of heresy was exempted by royal authority from all restrictions of law which fettered its activity. The Universities were visited; and the corpses of the foreign teachers who had found a resting place there under Edward—Bucer, Fagius, and Peter Martyr—were torn from their graves and reduced to ashes. The penalties of martial law were threatened against the possessors of heretical books issued from Geneva; the treasonable contents of which indeed, and their constant exhortations to rebellion and civil war, justly called for stern repression. But the loyalty which had seated Mary on the throne was fast dying away; and petty insurrections showed the revulsion of popular feeling. Open sympathy began to be shown to the sufferers for conscience' sake. In the three years of the persecution three hundred victims had perished at the stake. The people sickened at the work of death. The crowd round the fire at Smithfield shouted "Amen" to the prayer of seven martyrs whom Bonner had condemned, and prayed in its turn, that "God would strengthen them." Disease and famine quickened the general discontent which was roused when, in spite of the pledges given at her marriage, Mary dragged England into a war to support Philip—who on the Emperor's resignation had succeeded to his dominions of Spain, Flanders, and the New World—in a struggle against France. The war had hardly begun when, with characteristic secrecy and 1558.
energy, the Duke of Guise flung himself upon Calais, and compelled it to surrender before succour could arrive. "The brightest jewel in the English crown," as all then held it to be, was suddenly reft away; and the surrender of Guisnes, which soon followed, left England without a foot of land on the Continent. But so profound was the discontent that even this blow failed to rally the country round the Queen. The forced loan to which she resorted came in slowly. The levies mutinied and dispersed. The death of Mary alone averted a general revolt, and a burst of enthusiastic joy hailed the accession of Elizabeth.

### Section III.—Elizabeth. 1558–1560.

[*Authorities.*—Camden's "Life of Elizabeth." For the ecclesiastical questions of this period, Strype's "Annals of the Reformation," his "Life of Parker," and the "Zurich Letters," published by the Parker Society, are of primary importance. Cardinal Granvelle's correspondence illustrates the policy of Spain, and M. Teulet has published a valuable series of French despatches. The "Burleigh Papers" (with which compare Nares's cumbrous "Life of

Digitized by Google

SEC. III. ELIZABETH. 1558-1560.

Lord Burleigh") and, above all, the State Papers now being calendared for the Master of the Rolls throw a new light on Elizabeth's own policy. Mr. Froude's account of her reign (vols. vii. to xii.) is of high value, and his extracts from State Papers of Cecil and the documents at Simancas have cleared up many of its greatest difficulties.]

---

**Elizabeth.**

Never had the fortunes of England sunk to a lower ebb than at the moment when Elizabeth mounted the throne. The country was humiliated by defeat, and brought to the verge of rebellion by the bloodshed and misgovernment of Mary's reign. The old social discontent, trampled down for a time by the mercenary troops of Somerset, still remained a perpetual menace to public order. The religious strife had passed beyond hope of reconciliation, now that the Reformers were parted from their opponents by the fires of Smithfield, and the party of the New Learning all but dissolved. The Catholics were bound helplessly to Rome. Protestantism, burnt at home and hurled into exile abroad, had become a fiercer thing; and was pouring back from Geneva with dreams of revolutionary change in Church and State. England, dragged at the heels of Philip into a useless and ruinous war, was left without an ally save Spain; while France, mistress of Calais, became mistress of the Channel. Not only was Scotland a standing danger in the north, through the French marriage of Mary Stuart and its consequent bondage to French policy; but its Queen had assumed the style and arms of an English sovereign, and threatened to rouse every Catholic throughout the realm against Elizabeth's title. In presence of this host of dangers the country lay utterly helpless, without army or fleet, or the means of manning one; for the treasury, already drained by the waste of Edward's reign, had been utterly exhausted by Mary's restoration of the Church-lands, and by the cost of her war with France.

1558. England's one hope lay in the character of her Queen. Elizabeth was now in her twenty-fifth year. Personally she had much of her mother's beauty; her figure was commanding, her face long, but queenly and intelligent, her eyes quick and fine. She had grown up amidst the liberal culture of Henry's Court a bold horsewoman, a good shot, a graceful dancer, a skilled musician, and an accomplished scholar. She read every morning a portion of Demosthenes, and could "rub up her rusty Greek" at need to bandy pedantry with a Vice-Chancellor. But she was far from being a mere pedant. The new literature which was springing up around her found constant welcome in her Court. She spoke Italian and French as fluently as her mother tongue. She was familiar with Ariosto and Tasso. In spite of the affectation of her style, and her taste for anagrams and puerilities, she listened with delight the to "Faery Queen," and found a smile for "Master Spenser" when he appeared in the Presence. Her moral

Digitized by Google

temper recalled in its strange contrasts the mixed blood within her veins. She was at once the daughter of Henry and of Anne Boleyn. From her father she inherited her frank and hearty address, her love of popularity and of free intercourse with the people, her dauntless courage, and her amazing self-confidence. Her harsh manlike voice, her impetuous will, her pride, her furious outbursts of anger came to her with her Tudor blood. She rated great nobles as if they were schoolboys; she met the insolence of Essex with a box on the ear; she would break, now and then, into the gravest deliberations to swear at her ministers like a fishwife. But strangely in contrast with the violent outlines of her Tudor temper stood the sensuous, self-indulgent nature she derived from Anne Boleyn. Splendour and pleasure were with Elizabeth the very air she breathed. Her delight was to move in perpetual progresses from castle to castle through a series of gorgeous pageants, fanciful and extravagant as a Caliph's dream. She loved gaiety and laughter and wit. A happy retort or a finished compliment never failed to win her favour. She hoarded jewels. Her dresses were innumerable. Her vanity remained, even to old age, the vanity of a coquette in her teens. No adulation was too fulsome for her, no flattery of her beauty too gross. "To see her was heaven," Hutton told her, "the lack of her was hell." She would play with her rings that her courtiers might note the delicacy of her hands; or dance a coranto, that the French ambassador, hidden dexterously behind a curtain, might report her sprightliness to his master. Her levity, her frivolous laughter, her unwomanly jests gave colour to a thousand scandals. Her character, in fact, like her portraits, was utterly without shade. Of womanly reserve or self-restraint she knew nothing. No instinct of delicacy veiled the voluptuous temper which had broken out in the romps of her girlhood, and showed itself almost ostentatiously throughout her later life. Personal beauty in a man was a sure passport to her liking. She patted handsome young squires on the neck when they knelt to kiss her hand, and fondled her "sweet Robin," Lord Leicester, in the face of the Court.

It was no wonder that the statesmen whom she outwitted held Elizabeth almost to the last to be little more than a frivolous woman; or that Philip of Spain wondered how "a wanton" could hold in check the policy of the Escurial. But the Elizabeth whom they saw was far from being all of Elizabeth. The wilfulness of Henry, the triviality of Anne Boleyn played over the surface of a nature hard as steel, a temper purely intellectual, the very type of reason untouched by imagination or passion. Luxurious and pleasure-loving as she seemed, Elizabeth lived simply and frugally, and she worked hard. Her vanity and caprice had no weight whatever with her in state affairs. The coquette of the presence chamber became the coolest and hardest of politicians at the council board. Fresh from

Digitized by Google

the flattery of her courtiers, she would tolerate no flattery in the closet; she was herself plain and downright of speech with her counsellors, and she looked for a corresponding plainness of speech in return. Her expenditure was parsimonious and even miserly. If any trace of her sex lingered in her actual statesmanship, it was seen in the simplicity and tenacity of purpose that often underlies a woman's fluctuations of feeling. It was this in part which gave her her marked superiority over the statesmen of her time. No nobler group of ministers ever gathered round a council board than those who gathered round the council board of Elizabeth. But she is the instrument of none. She listens, she weighs, she uses or puts by the counsels of each in turn, but her policy as a whole is her own. It was a policy, not of genius, but of good sense. Her aims were simple and obvious: to preserve her throne, to keep England out of war, to restore civil and religious order. Something of womanly caution and timidity, perhaps, backed the passionless indifference with which she set aside the larger schemes of ambition which were ever opening before her eyes. She was resolute in her refusal of the Low Countries. She rejected with a laugh the offers of the Protestants to make her "head of the Religion" and "mistress of the Seas." But her amazing success in the end sprang mainly from this wise limitation of her aims. She had a finer sense than any of her counsellors of her real resources; she knew instinctively how far she could go, and what she could do. Her cold, critical intellect was never swayed by enthusiasm or by panic either to exaggerate or to under-estimate her risks or her power.

Of political wisdom, indeed, in its larger and more generous sense, Elizabeth had little or none; but her political tact was unerring. She seldom saw her course at a glance, but she played with a hundred courses, fitfully and discursively, as a musician runs his fingers over the key-board, till she hit suddenly upon the right one. Such a nature was essentially practical and of the present. She distrusted a plan, in fact, just in proportion to its speculative range, or its out-look into the future. Her notion of statesmanship lay in watching how things turned out around her, and in seizing the moment for making the best of them. A policy of this limited, practical, tentative order was not only best suited to the England of her day, to its small resources and the transitional character of its religious and political belief, but it was one eminently suited to Elizabeth's peculiar powers. It was a policy of detail, and in details her wonderful readiness and ingenuity found scope for their exercise. "No War, my Lords," the Queen used to cry imperiously at the council board, "No War!" but her hatred of war sprang less from aversion to blood or to expense, real as was her aversion to both, than from the fact that peace left the field open to the diplomatic manœuvres and intrigues in which she excelled. It was her delight in the consciousness of her ingenuity which broke out

Digitized by Google

in a thousand puckish freaks, freaks in which one can hardly see any purpose beyond the purpose of sheer mystification. She revelled in "bye-ways" and "crooked ways." She played with grave cabinets as a cat plays with a mouse, and with much of the same feline delight in the mere embarrassment of her victims. When she was weary of mystifying foreign statesmen she turned to find fresh sport in mystifying her own ministers. Had Elizabeth written the story of her reign she would have prided herself, not on the triumph of England or the ruin of Spain, but on the skill with which she had hoodwinked and outwitted every statesman in Europe during fifty years. Nor was her trickery without political value. Ignoble, inexpressibly wearisome as the Queen's diplomacy seems to us now, tracing it as we do through a thousand despatches, it succeeded in its main end. It gained time, and every year that was gained doubled Elizabeth's strength. Nothing is more revolting in the Queen, but nothing is more characteristic, than her shameless mendacity. It was an age of political lying, but in the profusion and recklessness of her lies Elizabeth stood without a peer in Christendom. A falsehood was to her simply an intellectual means of meeting a difficulty; and the ease with which she asserted or denied whatever suited her purpose was only equalled by the cynical indifference with which she met the exposure of her lies as soon as their purpose was answered. The same purely intellectual view of things showed itself in the dexterous use she made of her very faults. Her levity carried her gaily over moments of detection and embarrassment where better women would have died of shame. She screened her tentative and hesitating statesmanship under the natural timidity and vacillation of her sex. She turned her very luxury and sports to good account. There were moments of grave danger in her reign when the country remained indifferent to its perils, as it saw the Queen give her days to hawking and hunting, and her nights to dancing and plays. Her vanity and affectation, her womanly fickleness and caprice, all had their part in the diplomatic comedies she played with the successive candidates for her hand. If political necessities made her life a lonely one, she had at any rate the satisfaction of averting war and conspiracies by love sonnets and romantic interviews, or of gaining a year of tranquillity by the dexterous spinning out of a flirtation.

As we track Elizabeth through her tortuous mazes of lying and intrigue, the sense of her greatness is almost lost in a sense of contempt. But, wrapt as they were in a cloud of mystery, the aims of her policy were throughout temperate and simple, and they were pursued with a singular tenacity. The sudden acts of energy which from time to time broke her habitual hesitation proved that it was no hesitation of weakness. Elizabeth could wait and finesse; but when the hour was come she could strike, and strike hard. Her natural temper, indeed,

Digitized by Google

tended to a rash self-confidence rather than to self-distrust. She had, as strong natures always have, an unbounded confidence in her luck. "Her Majesty counts much on Fortune," Walsingham wrote bitterly; "I wish she would trust more in Almighty God." The diplomatists who censured at one moment her irresolution, her delay, her changes of front, censure at the next her "obstinacy," her iron will, her defiance of what seemed to them inevitable ruin. "This woman," Philip's envoy wrote after a wasted remonstrance,—"this woman is possessed by a hundred thousand devils." To her own subjects, indeed, who knew nothing of her manœuvres and retreats, of her "bye-ways" and "crooked ways," she seemed the embodiment of dauntless resolution. Brave as they were, the men who swept the Spanish main or glided between the icebergs of Baffin's Bay never doubted that the palm of bravery lay with their Queen. Her steadiness and courage in the pursuit of her aims was equalled by the wisdom with which she chose the men to accomplish them. She had a quick eye for merit of any sort, and a wonderful power of enlisting its whole energy in her service. None of our sovereigns ever gathered such a group of advisers to their council board as gathered round the council board of Elizabeth, but the sagacity which chose Burleigh and Walsingham was just as unerring in its choice of the meanest of her agents. Her success, indeed, in securing from the beginning of her reign to its end, with the single exception of Leicester, precisely the right men for the work she set them to do, sprang in great measure from the noblest characteristic of her intellect. If in loftiness of aim her temper fell below many of the tempers of her time, in the breadth of its range, in the universality of its sympathy it stood far above them all. Elizabeth could talk poetry with Spenser and philosophy with Bruno; she could discuss Euphuism with Lyly, and enjoy the chivalry of Essex; she could turn from talk of the last fashions to pore with Cecil over despatches and treasury books; she could pass from tracking traitors with Walsingham to settle points of doctrine with Parker, or to calculate with Frobisher the chances of a north-west passage to the Indies. The versatility and many-sidedness of her mind enabled her to understand every phase of the intellectual movement of her day, and to fix by a sort of instinct on its higher representatives. But the greatness of the Queen rests above all on her power over her people. We have had grander and nobler rulers, but none so popular as Elizabeth. The passion of love, of loyalty, of admiration which finds its most perfect expression in the "Faery Queen," pulsed as intensely through the veins of her meanest subjects. To England, during her reign of half a century, she was a virgin and a Protestant Queen; and her immorality, her absolute want of religious enthusiasm, failed utterly to blur the brightness of the national ideal. Her worst acts broke fruitlessly against the general devotion. A Puritan, whose hand she hacked off in a freak of tyrannous resentment, waved the stump round his head, and

Digitized by Google

shouted "God save Queen Elizabeth." Of her faults, indeed, England beyond the circle of her court knew little or nothing. The shiftings of her diplomacy were never seen outside the Royal closet. The nation at large could only judge her foreign policy by its main outlines, by its temperance and good sense, and, above all, by its success. But every Englishman was able to judge Elizabeth in her rule at home, in her love of peace, her instinct of order, the firmness and moderation of her government, the judicious spirit of conciliation and compromise among warring factions, which gave the country an unexampled tranquillity at a time when almost every other country in Europe was torn with civil war. Every sign of the growing prosperity, the sight of London as it became the mart of the world, of stately mansions as they rose on every manor, told, and justly told, in Elizabeth's favour. In one act of her civil administration she showed the boldness and originality of a great ruler; for the opening of her reign saw her face the social difficulty which had so long impeded English progress, by the issue of a commission of inquiry which ended in the solution of the problem by the system of poor-laws. For commerce indeed laws could do little; and Elizabeth's active interference hindered rather than furthered its advance; but the interference was for the most part well meant, and her statue in the centre of the London Exchange was a tribute on the part of the merchant-class to the interest with which she watched, and shared personally in, its enterprises. Her thrift won a general gratitude. The memories of the Terror and of the Martyrs threw into bright relief the aversion from bloodshed which was conspicuous in her earlier reign, and never wholly wanting through its fiercer close. Above all, there was a general confidence in her instinctive knowledge of the national temper. Her finger was always on the public pulse. She knew exactly when she could resist the feeling of her people, and when she must give way before the new sentiment of freedom which her policy had unconsciously fostered. But when she retreated, her defeat had all the grace of victory; and the frankness and unreserve of her surrender won back at once the love that her resistance had lost. Her attitude at home, in fact, was that of a woman whose pride in the well-being of her subjects, and whose longing for their favour, was the one warm touch in the coldness of her natural temper. If Elizabeth could be said to love anything, she loved England. "Nothing," she said to her first Parliament in words of unwonted fire, "nothing, no worldly thing under the sun, is so dear to me as the love and good-will of my subjects." And the love and good-will which were so dear to her she fully won.

She clung perhaps to her popularity the more passionately that it hid in some measure from her the terrible loneliness of her life. She was the last of the Tudors, the last of Henry's children; and her nearest relatives were Mary Stuart and the House of Suffolk, one the

Digitized by Google

SEC. III.
ELIZABETH.
1558-1560.

avowed, the other the secret claimant of her throne. Among her mother's kindred she found but a distant cousin. Whatever womanly tenderness she had, wrapt itself around Leicester; but a marriage with Leicester was impossible, and every other union, could she even have bent to one, was denied to her by the political difficulties of her position. The one cry of bitterness which burst from Elizabeth revealed her terrible sense of the solitude of her life. "The Queen of Scots," she cried at the birth of James, "has a fair son, and I am but a barren stock." But the loneliness of her position only reflected the loneliness of her nature. She stood utterly apart from the world around her, sometimes above it, sometimes below it, but never of it. It was only on her intellectual side that Elizabeth touched the England of her day. All its moral aspects were simply dead to her. It was a time when men were being lifted into nobleness by the new moral energy which seemed suddenly to pulse through the whole people; when honour and enthusiasm took colours of poetic beauty, and religion became a chivalry. But the finer sentiments of the men around her touched Elizabeth simply as the fair tints of a picture would have touched her. She made her market with equal indifference out of the heroism of William of Orange or the bigotry of Philip. The noblest aims and lives were only counters on her board. She was the one soul in her realm whom the news of St. Bartholomew stirred to no lasting thirst for vengeance; and while England was thrilling with its triumph over the Armada, its Queen was coolly grumbling over the cost, and making her profit out of the spoilt provisions she had ordered for the fleet that saved her. To the voice of gratitude, indeed, she was absolutely deaf. She accepted service, such as never was rendered to an English sovereign, without a thought of return. Walsingham spent his fortune in saving her life and her throne, and she left him to die a beggar. Whatever odium or loss her manœuvres incurred she flung upon her councillors. To screen her part in Mary's death she called on Davison to perish broken-hearted in the Tower. But as if by a strange irony, it was to this very want of sympathy that she owed some of the grander features of her character. If she was without love, she was without hate. She cherished no petty resentments; she never stooped to envy or suspicion of the men who served her. She was indifferent to abuse. Her good-humour was never ruffled by the charges of wantonness and cruelty with which the Jesuits filled every court in Europe. She was insensible to fear. Her life became at last the mark for assassin after assassin, but the thought of peril was the one hardest to bring home to her. Even when the Catholic plots broke out in her very household, she would listen to no proposals for the removal of Catholics from her court.

It was this moral isolation which told so strangely both for good and for evil on her policy towards the Church. No woman ever lived

Digitized by Google

**Elizabeth and the Church.**

who was so totally destitute of the sentiment of religion. While the world around her was being swayed more and more by theological beliefs and controversies, Elizabeth was absolutely untouched by them. She was a child of the Italian Renascence rather than of the New Learning of Colet or Erasmus, and her attitude towards the enthusiasm of her time was that of Lorenzo de' Medici towards Savonarola. Her mind was unruffled by the spiritual problems which were vexing the minds around her; to Elizabeth, indeed, they were not only unintelligible, they were a little ridiculous. She had the same intellectual contempt for the coarser superstition of the Romanist as for the bigotry of the Protestant. She ordered images to be flung into the fire, and quizzed the Puritans as "brethren in Christ." But she had no sort of religious aversion for either Puritan or Papist. The Protestants grumbled at the Catholic nobles whom she admitted to the presence. The Catholics grumbled at the Protestant statesmen whom she called to her council board. But to Elizabeth the arrangement was the most natural thing in the world. She looked at theological differences in a purely political light. She agreed with Henry the Fourth that a kingdom was well worth a mass. It seemed an obvious thing to her to hold out hopes of conversion as a means of deceiving Philip, or to gain a point in negotiation by restoring the crucifix to her chapel. The first interest in her own mind was the interest of public order, and she never could understand how it could fail to be first in everyone's mind. Her ingenuity set itself to construct a system in which ecclesiastical unity should not jar against the rights of conscience; a compromise which merely required outer "conformity" to the established worship while, as she was never weary of repeating, it "left opinion free." For this purpose she fell back from the very first on the system of Henry the Eighth. "I will do," she told the Spanish ambassador, "as my father did." She let the connexion with Rome drop quietly without any overt act of separation. The first work of her Parliament was to undo the work of Mary, to repeal the Statutes of Heresy, to dissolve the refounded monasteries, and to restore the Royal Supremacy. At her entry into London Elizabeth kissed the English Bible which the citizens presented to her, and promised "diligently to read therein." Further she had no personal wish to go. A third of the Council, and two-thirds of the people, were as opposed to any radical changes in religion as the Queen: Among the gentry the older and wealthier were on the conservative side, and only the younger and meaner on the other. But it was soon necessary to go further. If the Protestants were the less numerous, they were the abler and the more vigorous party; and the exiles who returned from Geneva brought with them a fiercer hatred of Catholicism. Transubstantiation and the Mass were identified with the fires of Smithfield, while Edward's Prayer-book was hallowed

1559



Digitized by Google

Sec. III.
Elizabeth.
1558–1560.

by the memories of the Martyrs. But, in her restoration of the English Prayer-book, some slight alterations made by Elizabeth in its language showed her wish to conciliate the Catholics as far as possible. She had no mind to commit herself to the system of the Protectorate. She dropped the words "Head of the Church" from the Royal title. The forty-two Articles were left for some years in abeyance. If Elizabeth had had her will, she would have retained the celibacy of the clergy, and restored the use of crucifixes in the churches. But she was again foiled by the increased bitterness of the religious division. The London mob tore down the crosses in the streets. Her attempt to retain the crucifix fell dead before the fierce opposition of the Protestant clergy. On the other hand, the Marian bishops, with a single exception, discerned the Protestant drift of the changes she was making, and bore imprisonment and deprivation rather than accept them. But to the mass of the nation the compromise of Elizabeth seems to have been fairly acceptable. The whole of the clergy, save two hundred, submitted to the Act of Supremacy, and adopted the Prayer-book. No marked repugnance to the new worship was shown by the people at large; and Elizabeth was able to turn from questions of belief to the question of order. On one point in the treatment of the Church she was resolved to make no difference. To the end of her reign she remained as bold a plunderer of its wealth as either of her predecessors, and carved out rewards for her ministers from the Church-lands with a queenly disregard of the rights of property. Lord Burleigh built up the estate of the house of Cecil out of the demesnes of the see of Peterborough. The neighbourhood of Hatton Garden to Ely Place recalls the spoliation of another bishopric in favour of the Queen's sprightly chancellor. Her reply to the bishop's protest against this robbery showed what Elizabeth meant by her Ecclesiastical Supremacy. "Proud prelate," she wrote, "you know what you were before I made you what you are! If you do not immediately comply with my request, by God I will unfrock you." But she suffered no plunder save her own, and she was earnest for the restoration of order and decency in the outer arrangements of the Church.

**Parker.**

Her selection of Parker, the new Archbishop of Canterbury, as her agent in its reorganization was probably dictated by the correspondence of his character with that of the Queen. Theologically the Primate was a moderate man, but he was resolute to restore order in the discipline and worship of the Church. The whole machinery of public religion had been thrown out of gear by the rapid and radical changes of the past two reigns. In some dioceses a third of the parishes were without clergymen. The churches themselves were falling into ruin. The majority of the parish priests were still Catholic in heart; in the north, indeed, they made little disguise of their re-

Digitized by Google

actionary tendencies. On the other hand, the Protestant minority among the clergy were already disgusting the people by their violence and greed. Chapters had begun to plunder their own estates by leases and fines and by felling timber. The marriages of the clergy were a perpetual scandal, a scandal which was increased when the gorgeous vestments of the old worship were cut up into gowns and bodices for the priests' wives. The new services became scenes of utter disorder, where the clergy wore what dress they pleased, and the communicant stood or sate as he liked; while the old altars were broken down and the communion-table was often a bare board upon trestles. The people, naturally enough, were found to be "utterly devoid of religion," and came to church "as to a May game." To the difficulties which Parker found in the temper of the Reformers and their opponents, new difficulties were added by the freaks of the Queen. If she had no convictions, she had tastes; and her taste revolted from the bareness of Protestant ritual, and above all from the marriage of priests. "Leave that alone," she shouted to Dean Nowell from the Royal closet as he denounced the use of images—"Stick to your text, Master Dean, leave that alone!" Parker however was firm in resisting the introduction of the crucifix or of celibacy, and Elizabeth showed her resentment at his firmness by an insult to his wife. Married ladies were addressed at this time as "Madam," unmarried ladies as "Mistress;" and when Mrs. Parker advanced at the close of a sumptuous entertainment at Lambeth to take leave of the Queen, Elizabeth feigned a momentary hesitation. "Madam," she said at last, "I may not call you, and Mistress I am loth to call you; however I thank you for your good cheer." But freaks of this sort had little real influence on the Queen's policy, or on the steady support which she gave to the Primate in his work of order. The vacant sees were filled for the most part with learned and able men; the plunder of the Church by the nobles was checked; and England was settling quietly down again in religious peace when a prohibition from Rome forbade the presence of Catholics at the new worship. The order was widely obeyed, and the obedience was accepted 1562.
by Elizabeth as a direct act of defiance. Heavy "fines for recusancy," levied on all who absented themselves from church, became a constant source of supply to the Royal exchequer. Meanwhile Parker was labouring for a uniformity of faith and worship amongst the clergy. Of the forty-two articles enjoined by Edward, thirty-nine were re- 1563.
stored as a standard of belief, and a commission was opened by the Queen's order at Lambeth, with the Primate at its head, to enforce the Act of Uniformity in all matters of public worship. At one critical 1564.
moment the extreme Protestants took alarm, churchwardens in London refused to provide surplices, and for a time it was necessary to suspend the more recalcitrant ministers. But the work of the Commission



Digitized by Google

Sec. III. Elizabeth. 1558-1560. Scotland.

was too clearly needed to be permanently resisted; the more extreme Protestants were suffered to preach by connivance; and throughout the Church at large some kind of decent order was restored.

The settlement of religion however was the least pressing of the cares which met Elizabeth as she mounted the throne. The country was drained by war; yet she could only free herself from war, and from the dependence on Spain which it involved, by acquiescing in the
1559. loss of Calais. But though peace was won by the sacrifice, France remained openly hostile; the Dauphin and his wife, Mary Stuart, assumed the arms and style of King and Queen of England; and their pretensions became a source of immediate danger through the presence of a French army in Scotland. To understand, however, what had taken place there we must cursorily review the past history of the Northern Kingdom. From the moment when England finally abandoned the fruitless effort to subdue it, the story of Scotland had been a miserable one. Whatever peace might be concluded, a sleepless dread of the old danger from the South tied the country to an alliance with France, which dragged it into the vortex of the Hundred Years' War. But after the great defeat and capture of David in the field of Neville's Cross, the struggle died down on both sides
1388. into marauding forays and battles, like those of Otterburn and Homildon Hill, in which alternate victories were won by the feudal
1402. lords of the Scotch or English border. The ballad of "Chevy Chase" brings home to us the spirit of the contest, the daring and defiance which stirred Sidney's heart "like a trumpet," but its effect on the internal development of Scotland was utterly ruinous. The houses of Douglas and of March, which it raised into supremacy, only interrupted their strife with England to battle fiercely with one another or to coerce the King. The power of the Crown sank in fact into insignificance under the earlier sovereigns of the line of Stuart, which had succeeded to the throne on the extinction of the male line of Bruce. Invasions and civil feuds not only arrested, but even rolled back the national industry and prosperity. The country was a chaos of disorder and misrule, in which the peasant and the trader were the victims of feudal outrage. The Border became a lawless land, where robbery and violence reigned utterly without
1411. check. So pitiable seemed the state of the kingdom that the clans of the Highlands drew together at last to swoop upon it as a certain prey; but the common peril united the factions of the nobles, and the victory of Harlaw saved the Lowlands from the rule of the Celt. A great name at last broke the line of its worthless kings. Schooled by a long captivity in England, James the First returned to his realm to be the ablest of her rulers, as he was the first
1424. of her poets. In the twelve years of a short but wonderful reign, justice and order were restored for a while, the Parliament organized

Digitized by Google

on the English model, the clans of the Highlands assailed in their own fastnesses and reduced to swear fealty to the "Saxon" king. He turned to assail the great houses, but feudal violence was still too strong for the hand of the law, and a band of ruffians who burst into the Royal chamber left the King lifeless with sixteen stabs in his body. The death of James was the signal for an open struggle for supremacy between the House of Douglas and the Crown, which lasted through half a century. Order, however, crept gradually in; the exile of the Douglases left the Scottish monarchs supreme in the Lowlands; while their dominion over the Highlands was secured by the ruin of the Lords of the Isles. The fatal contest with England ceased with the accession of the House of Tudor; and the policy of Henry the Seventh bound for a time the two kingdoms together by bestowing the hand of his daughter Margaret on the Scottish king. The union was soon dissolved however by his son's claims of supremacy, and by the intrigues of Wolsey; war broke out anew, and the terrible defeat and death of James the Fourth at Flodden Field involved his realm in the turbulence and misrule of a minority. The actual reign of his successor, James the Fifth, had hardly begun, when his sympathies with the English Catholics aided the ambition of Somerset in plunging the two countries into a fresh struggle. His defeat at Solway Moor brought the young King broken-hearted to his grave. "It came with a lass and it will go with a lass," he cried, as they brought him on his death-bed the news of Mary Stuart's birth. The hand of his infant successor at once became the subject of rivalry between England and France. Had Mary, as Somerset desired, been wedded to Edward the Sixth, the whole destinies of Europe might have been changed by the union of the two realms; but the recent bloodshed had embittered Scotland, and the high-handed way in which the English statesmen pushed their marriage project completed the breach. Somerset's invasion and victory at Pinkie Clough only enabled Mary of Guise, the French wife of James the Fifth, who had become Regent of the realm at his death, to induce the Scotch estates to consent to the union of her child with the heir of the French crown, the Dauphin Francis. From that moment, as we have seen, the claims of the Scottish Queen on the English throne became so formidable a danger as to drive Mary Tudor to her marriage with Philip of Spain. But the danger became a still greater one on the accession of Elizabeth, whose legitimacy no Catholic acknowledged, and whose religious attitude tended to throw the Catholic party into her rival's hands.

1436.

1513.

1542.

**Elizabeth and Scotland.**

In spite of the peace with France, therefore, Francis and Mary persisted in their pretensions; and a French force which occupied Leith was slowly increased, with the connivance of Mary of Guise. The appearance of this force on the Border was intended to bring about a Catholic rising. But the hostility between France and Spain

Digitized by Google

bound Philip, for the moment, to the support of Elizabeth; and his influence over the Catholics secured quiet for a time. The Queen, too, played with their hopes of a religious reaction by talk of her own conversion, by the re-introduction of the crucifix into her chapel, and by plans for her marriage with an Austrian and Catholic prince. Meanwhile she parried the blow in Scotland itself, where the Reformation had just begun to gain ground, by secretly encouraging the "Lords of the Congregation," as the nobles who headed the Protestant party were styled, to rise against the Regent. Elizabeth's diplomacy gained her a year, and her matchless activity used the year to good purpose. Order was restored throughout England, the Church was reorganized, the debts of the Crown were paid off, the treasury recruited, a navy created, and a force was ready for action in the north, when the defeat of her Scotch adherents forced her at last to throw aside the mask. As yet she stood almost alone in her self-reliance. Spain, while supporting her, believed her ruin to be certain; France despised her chances; her very Council was in despair. The one minister in whom she really confided was Cecil, the youngest and boldest of her advisers, and even Cecil trembled for her success. But lies and hesitation were no sooner put aside than the Queen's vigour and tenacity came fairly into play. Wynter, the English admiral, appeared suddenly on the Forth, and forced D'Oysel, the French commander, to fall back upon Leith, at the moment when he was on the point of crushing the Lords of the Congregation. France was taken by surprise, and could give little help save by negotiation; but Elizabeth refused to accept any terms save the withdrawal of every Frenchman, and the abandonment of the claim of Mary Stuart upon her crown. On the refusal of these terms, Lord Grey moved over the border with 8,000 men to join the Lords of the Congregation in the siege of Leith. The Scots, indeed, gave little aid; and Philip, in his jealousy of Elizabeth's sudden strength, demanded the abandonment of the enter-
1560. prise; while an assault on the town signally failed. But Elizabeth was immoveable. Famine did its work better than the sword; and in the Treaty of Edinburgh the French bought the liberation of their army by a pledge to abandon the kingdom, and by an admission of the Queen's title to her throne. The government of Scotland was placed in the hands of a council of its lords; and the provision which secured for the Protestants the free exercise of their religion bound to Elizabeth a party which would be of service to her in any danger from the North.

Digitized by Google

## Section IV.—England and Mary Stuart. 1560–1572.

[*Authorities.*—To those mentioned in the previous section, we may add Strype's "Lives of Grindal and Whitgift," the French despatches of Fénelon, Howell's "State Trials;" and for the Dutch revolt Motley's "History of the United Netherlands."]

**Mary Stuart.**

The issue of the Scotch war revealed suddenly to Europe the vigour of Elizabeth, and the real strength of her throne. She had freed herself from the control of Philip, she had defied France, she had averted the danger from the North by the creation of an English party among the nobles of Scotland. The same use of religious divisions soon gave her a similar check on the hostility of France. The Huguenots, as the French Protestants were called, had become a formidable party under the guidance of the Admiral Coligny; and the defeat of their rising against the family of the Guises, who stood at the head of the French Catholics and were supreme at the Court of Francis and Mary, threw them on the support and alliance of Elizabeth. 1561. But if the decisive outbreak of the great religious struggle, so long looked for between the Old Faith and the New, gave Elizabeth strength abroad, it weakened her at home. Her Catholic subjects lost all hope of her conversion as they saw the Queen allying herself with the Scotch lords and the French Huguenots; her hopes of a religious compromise in matters of worship were broken by the issue of a Papal brief which forbade attendance at the English service; and Philip of Spain, freed like herself from the fear of France by its religious divisions, no longer held the English Catholics in check. He was preparing, in fact, to take a new political stand as the patron of Catholicism throughout the world; and his troops were directed to support the Guises in the civil war which broke out after the death of Francis the Second, and to attack the heretics wherever they might find them. "Religion," he told Elizabeth, "was being made a cloak for anarchy and revolution." It was at the moment when the last hopes of the English Catholics were dispelled by the Queen's refusal to take part in the Council of Trent, that Mary Stuart, whom the death of her husband had left a stranger in France, landed suddenly at Leith. Girl as she was, and she was only nineteen, she was hardly inferior in intellectual power to Elizabeth herself, while in fire and grace and brilliancy of temper she stood high above her. She brought with her the voluptuous refinement of the French Renascence; she would lounge for days in bed, and rise only at night for dances and music. But her frame was of iron, and incapable of fatigue; she galloped ninety miles after her last defeat without a pause save to change horses. She loved risk and adventure and the ring of arms; as she rode in a foray against Huntley, the grim swordsman beside

Digitized by Google

her heard her wish she was a man, "to know what life it was to lie all night in the field, or to watch on the cawsey with a Glasgow buckler and a broadsword." But in the closet she was as cool and astute a politician as Elizabeth herself; with plans as subtle, but of a far wider and grander range than the Queen's. "Whatever policy is in all the chief and best practised heads of France," wrote an English envoy, "whatever craft, falsehood, and deceit is in all the subtle brains of Scotland, is either fresh in this woman's memory, or she can fetch it out with a wet finger." Her beauty, her exquisite grace of manner, her generosity of temper and warmth of affection, her frankness of speech, her sensibility, her gaiety, her womanly tears, her manlike courage, the play and freedom of her nature, the flashes of poetry that broke from her at every intense moment of her life, flung a spell over friend or foe which has only deepened with the lapse of years. Even to Knollys, the sternest Puritan of his day, she seemed in her captivity to be "a notable woman." "She seemeth to regard no ceremonious honour besides the acknowledgment of her estate royal. She showeth a disposition to speak much, to be bold, to be pleasant, to be very familiar. She showeth a great desire to be avenged on her enemies. She shows a readiness to expose herself to all perils in hope of victory. She desires much to hear of hardiness and valiancy, commending by name all approved hardy men of her country though they be her enemies, and she concealeth no cowardice even in her friends." As yet men knew nothing of the stern bigotry, the intensity of passion which lay beneath the winning surface of Mary's womanhood. But they at once recognized her political ability. She had seized eagerly on the new strength which was given her by her husband's death. Her cause was no longer hampered, either in Scotland or in England, by a national jealousy of French interference. It was with a resolve to break the league between Elizabeth and the Scotch Protestants, to unite her own realm around her, and thus to give a firm base for her intrigues among the English Catholics, that Mary landed at Leith. The effect of her presence was marvellous. Her personal fascination revived the national loyalty, and swept all Scotland to her feet. Knox, the greatest and sternest of the Calvinistic preachers, alone withstood her spell. The rough Scotch nobles owned that there was in Mary "some enchantment whereby men are bewitched." A promise of religious toleration united her subjects as one man in support of the temperate claim which she advanced to be named Elizabeth's successor in Parliament. But the question of the succession, like the question of her marriage, was with Elizabeth a question of life and death. Her wedding with a Catholic or a Protestant suitor would have been equally the end of her system of balance and national union, a signal for the revolt of the party which she disappointed, and for the triumphant

Digitized by Google

dictation of the party which she satisfied. "If a Catholic prince come here," a Spanish ambassador wrote while pressing an Austrian marriage, "the first mass he attends will be the signal for a revolt." To name a Protestant successor from the House of Suffolk would have driven every Catholic to insurrection. To name Mary was to stir Protestantism to a rising of despair, and to leave Elizabeth at the mercy of every fanatical assassin who wished to clear the way for a Catholic ruler. "I am not so foolish," was the Queen's reply to Mary, "as to hang a winding sheet before my eyes." But the pressure on her was great, and Mary looked to the triumph of Catholicism in France to increase the pressure. It was this which drove Elizabeth to listen to the cry of the Huguenots at the moment when they were yielding to the strength of the Guises. Hate war as she might, 1562.
the instinct of self-preservation dragged her into the great struggle; and in spite of the menaces of Philip, money and seven thousand men were sent to the aid of the Protestants under Condé. But a fatal overthrow of the Huguenot army at Dreux left the Guises masters of France, and brought the danger to the very doors of England. The hopes of the English Catholics rose higher, and the measures of the Parliament showed its apprehensions of civil war. "There has been enough of words," said the Puritan Sir Francis Knollys; "it were time to draw sword;" and the sword was drawn 1562.
in a Test Act, the first in a series of penal statutes which weighed upon the English Catholics for two hundred years, by which the oath of allegiance and abjuration of the temporal authority of the Pope was exacted from all holders of office, lay or spiritual, within the realm, with the exception of peers. At this crisis, however, Elizabeth was able, as usual, to "count much on Fortune." The assassination of 1563.
the Duke of Guise broke up his party; a policy of moderation and balance prevailed at the French Court; and Catharine of Medicis, who was now supreme, was parted from Mary Stuart by a bitter hate.

**The Darnley Marriage.**

The Queen's good luck was chequered by a merited humiliation. She had sold her aid to the Huguenots in their hour of distress at the price of the surrender of Havre, and Havre was again wrested from her by the reunion of the French parties. But she had secured a year's respite in her anxieties; and Mary was utterly foiled in her plan for bringing the pressure of a united Scotland, backed by France, to bear upon her rival. But the defeat only threw her on a yet more formidable scheme. She was weary of the mask of religious indifference which her policy had forced her to wear with the view of securing the general support of her subjects. She resolved now to appeal to the English Catholics on the ground of Catholicism. Their sympathies had as yet been divided. Next to Mary in the hereditary line of succession stood Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, the son of the Countess of Lennox, and grandson of Margaret Tudor by her second marriage

Digitized by Google

with the Earl of Angus, as Mary was her grandchild by Margaret's first marriage with James the Fourth. The Lennoxes had remained rigid Catholics, and it was upon their succession rather than on that of the Queen of Scots that the hopes of the English Catholics had till now been fixed. It was by a match with Henry Stuart that Mary determined to unite the forces of Catholicism. With wonderful subtlety she succeeded in dispelling Elizabeth's suspicions, while drawing the boy and his mother to her Court; and the threat of war with which the English Queen strove too late to prevent the marriage only succeeded in hastening it. The match was regarded on all sides as a challenge to Protestantism. Philip, who had till now regarded Mary's pretence of toleration and her hopes from France with equal suspicion, was at last warm in commending her cause. "She is the one gate," he owned, "through which Religion can be restored in England. All the rest are closed." The Lords of the Congregation woke with a start from their confidence in the Queen, and her half-brother, Lord James Stuart, better known later on as Earl of Murray, mustered his Protestant confederates. But their revolt was hardly declared when Mary marched on them with pistols in her belt, and drove their leaders helplessly over the Border. Her boldness and energy cowed Elizabeth into the meanest dissimulation, while the announcement of her pregnancy soon gave her a strength which swept aside Philip's counsels of caution and delay. "With the help of God and of your Holiness," Mary wrote to the Pope, "I will leap over the wall." Rizzio, an Italian who had counselled the marriage, still remained her adviser, and the daring advice he gave fell in with her natural temper. She had resolved in the coming Parliament to restore Catholicism in Scotland. France in a fresh revolution fell again under the Guises, and offered her support. The English Catholics of the North prepared to revolt as soon as she was ready to aid them. No such danger had ever threatened Elizabeth as this, but everything hung on the will of a woman whose passions were even stronger than her will. Mary had staked all on her union with Darnley, and yet only a few months had passed since her wedding day when men saw that she "hated the King." The boy turned out a dissolute, insolent husband; and Mary's scornful refusal of his claim of the "crown matrimonial," a refusal probably inspired by her Italian minister Rizzio, drove his jealousy to madness. At the very moment when the Queen revealed the extent of her schemes by the attainder of Murray and his adherents and by her dismissal of the English ambassador, the young King, followed by his kindred the Douglases, burst into her chamber, dragged Rizzio from her presence, and stabbed him brutally on the stair-head. The darker features of Mary's character were now to develop themselves. Darnley, keen as was her thirst for vengeance on him, was needful as yet to her revenge on his abettors, and to the triumph of her political

1565.

1566.

Digitized by Google

aims. She masked her hatred beneath a show of affection which severed the wretched boy from his fellow-conspirators; then, flinging herself into Dunbar, she marched in triumph on Edinburgh at the head of eight thousand men, while the Douglases and the Protestant Lords who had shrunk from joining Murray fled to England or their strongholds. Her intrigues with the English Catholics she had never interrupted, and her Court was full of Papists from the northern counties. "Your actions," Elizabeth wrote in a sudden break of fierce candour, "are as full of venom as your words are of honey." The birth of her child, the future James the Sixth of Scotland and First of England, doubled Mary's strength. "Her friends were so increased," an ambassador wrote to her from England, "that many whole shires were ready to rebel, and their captains named by election of the nobility." However exaggerated such news may have been, the anxiety of the Parliament which met at this crisis proved that the danger was felt to be real. The Houses saw but one way of providing against it; and they renewed their appeal for the Queen's marriage, and for a settlement of the succession. As we have seen, both of these measures involved even greater dangers than they averted; but Elizabeth stood alone in her resistance to them. Even Cecil's fears for "the religion" proved greater than his statesmanship; and he pressed for a Protestant successor. But the Queen stood firm. The promise to marry, which she gave after a furious burst of anger, she resolved to evade as she had evaded it before. But the quarrel with the Commons which followed on her prohibition of any debate on the succession, a quarrel to which we shall recur at a later time, hit Elizabeth hard. It was "secret foes at home," she told the Commons as their quarrel passed away in a warm reconciliation, who "thought to work me that mischief which never foreign enemies could bring to pass, which is the hatred of my Commons. Do you think that either I am so unmindful of your surety by succession, wherein is all my care, or that I went about to break your liberties? No! it never was my meaning; but to stay you before you fell into the ditch." It was impossible for her however to explain the real reasons for her course, and the dissolution of the Parliament left her face to face with a new national discontent added to the ever-deepening peril from without.

**The Darnley Murder.**

One terrible event suddenly struck light through the gathering clouds. Mary had used Darnley as a tool to effect the ruin of his confederates and to further her policy, but she had never forgiven him. The miserable boy was left to wander in disgrace and neglect from place to place; while Mary's purpose of vengeance was quickened by Darnley's complaints and intrigues, and yet more by her passion for the Earl of Bothwell, the boldest, as he was the most worthless, of the younger nobles. Ominous words dropped from her lips. "Unless she were freed of him some way," she said at last, "she had no pleasure to live." Rumours of an approaching divorce were followed by darker

Digitized by Google

whispers among the lords. The terrible secret of the deed which followed is still wrapt in a cloud of doubt and mystery, which will probably never be wholly dispelled; but taken simply by themselves the facts have a significance which it is impossible to explain away. The Queen's hatred to Darnley passed all at once into demonstrations of the old affection. He had fallen sick with vice and misery, and she visited him on his sick bed, and persuaded him to follow her to Edinburgh. She visited him again in a ruinous and lonely house without the walls, in which he was lodged by her order, kissed him as she bade him farewell, and rode gaily back to a wedding-dance at Holyrood. Two hours after midnight an awful explosion shook the city; and the burghers rushed out from the gates to find the house of
1567. Kirk o' Field destroyed, and Darnley's body dead beside the ruins, though "with no sign of fire on it." The murder was undoubtedly the deed of Bothwell. His servants, it was soon known, had stored the powder beneath the King's bed-chamber; and the Earl had watched without the walls till the deed was done. But, in spite of gathering suspicion, and of the charge of murder made formally against him by Lord Lennox, no serious steps were taken to investigate the crime; and a rumour that Mary purposed to marry the murderer drove her friends to despair. Her agent in England wrote to her that "if she married that man she would lose the favour of God, her own reputation, and the hearts of all England, Ireland, and Scotland." But every stronghold in the kingdom was soon placed in Bothwell's hands, and this step was the prelude to a trial and acquittal which the overwhelming force of his followers in Edinburgh turned into a bitter mockery. The Earl was married, but a shameless suit for his divorce removed this last obstacle to his ambition; and his seizure of the Queen as she rode to Linlithgow was followed three weeks later by their union at Dunbar. In a month more all was over. The horror at such a marriage with a man fresh from her husband's blood drove the whole nation to revolt. Its nobles, Catholic as well as Protestant, gathered in arms at Stirling; and their entrance into Edinburgh roused the capital into insurrection. Mary and the Earl advanced with a fair force to Seton to encounter the Lords; but their men refused to fight, and Bothwell galloped off into lifelong exile, while the Queen was brought back to Edinburgh in a frenzy of despair, tossing back wild words of defiance to the curses of the crowd. From Edinburgh she was carried a prisoner to the fortress of Lochleven; and her brother, the Earl of Murray, was recalled from banishment to accept the Regency of the realm.

**Mary in England.**

For the moment England was saved, but the ruin of Mary's hopes had not come one instant too soon. The great conflict between the two religions, which had begun in France, was slowly widening into a general struggle over the whole face of Europe. For four years the

Digitized by Google

balanced policy of Catharine of Medicis had wrested a truce from both Catholics and Huguenots, but Condé and the Guises again rose in arms, each side eager to find its profit in the new troubles which now broke out in Flanders. For the long persecution of the Protestants there, and the unscrupulous invasion of the constitutional liberties of the Provinces by Philip of Spain, had at last stirred the Netherlands to revolt; and the insurrection was seized by Philip as a pretext for dealing a blow he had long meditated at the growing heresy of this portion of his dominions. At the moment when Mary entered Lochleven, the Duke of Alva was starting with a veteran army on his march to the Low Countries; and with his easy triumph over their insurgent forces began the terrible series of outrages and massacres which have made his name infamous in history. No event could be more embarrassing to Elizabeth than the arrival of Alva in Flanders. His extirpation of heresy there would prove the prelude for his co-operation with the Guises in the extirpation of heresy in France. Without counting, too, this future danger, the mere triumph of Catholicism, and the presence of a Catholic army, in a country so closely connected with England at once revived the dreams of a Catholic rising against her throne; while the news of Alva's massacres stirred in every one of her Protestant subjects a thirst for revenge which it was hard to hold in check. Yet to strike a blow at Alva was impossible, for Antwerp was the great mart of English trade, and its master had our rising commerce in his power. A final stoppage of the trade with Flanders would have broken half the merchants in London. Every day was deepening the perplexities of Elizabeth, when Mary succeeded in making her escape from Lochleven. Defeated at Langsyde, where the energy of Murray promptly crushed the rising of the Hamiltons in her support, she abandoned all hope of Scotland; and changing her designs with the rapidity of genius, she pushed in a light boat across the Solway, and was safe before evening fell in the castle of Carlisle. Though her power over her own kingdom was gone, she saw that imprisonment and suffering had done much to wipe away her shame in the hearts of the Catholic party across the English border, kindled as they were to new hopes of triumph by the victories of Alva. But the presence of Alva in Flanders was a far less peril than the presence of Mary in Carlisle. To retain her in England was to furnish a centre for revolt; Mary herself, indeed, threatened that "if they kept her prisoner they should have enough to do with her." Her ostensible demand was for English aid in her restoration to the throne, or for a free passage to France: but compliance with the last request would have given the Guises a terrible weapon against Elizabeth and have ensured a new French intervention in Scotland, while to restore her by arms to the crown she had lost without some public investigation of the dark crimes laid to her charge was impossible. So eager, however, was Elizabeth to get rid of

1568.

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.
ENGLAND AND MARY STUART.
1560-1572.

the pressing peril of her presence in England, that Mary's refusal to submit to any trial only drove her to fresh devices for her restoration. She urged upon Murray the suppression of the graver charges, and upon Mary the leaving Murray in actual possession of the Royal power as the price of her return. Neither however would listen to terms which sacrificed both to Elizabeth's self-interest; the Regent formally advanced charges of murder and adultery against the Queen, while Mary refused either to answer, or to abdicate in favour of her infant son. The triumph indeed of her bold policy was best advanced, as the Queen of Scots had no doubt foreseen, by simple inaction. Elizabeth "had the wolf by the ears," while the fierce contest which Alva's cruelty roused in the Netherlands was firing the temper of the two great parties in England.

**The Catholic Revolts.**

In the Court, as in the country, the forces of progress and of resistance stood at last in sharp and declared opposition to each other. Cecil, at the head of the Protestants, demanded a general alliance with the Protestant churches throughout Europe, a war in Flanders against Alva, and the unconditional surrender of Mary to her Scotch subjects for the punishment she deserved. The Catholics, on the other hand, backed by the mass of the Conservative party with the Duke of Norfolk at its head, and supported by the wealthier merchants, who dreaded the ruin of the Flemish trade, were as earnest in demanding the dismissal of Cecil and the Protestants from the council board, a steady peace with Spain, and, though less openly, a recognition of Mary's succession. Elizabeth was driven to temporize as before. She refused Cecil's counsels; but she sent money and arms to Condé, and hampered Alva by seizing treasure on its way to him, and by pushing the quarrel even to a temporary embargo on shipping either side the sea. She refused the counsels of Norfolk; but she would hear nothing of a declaration of war, or give any judgment on the charges against the Scottish Queen, or recognize the accession of James in her stead. The patience of the great Catholic lords, however, was at last exhausted; and the effect of Mary's presence in England was seen in
1569. the rising of the houses of Neville and of Percy. The entry of the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland into Durham Cathedral proved the signal for revolt. The rising was a purely Catholic rising; the Bible and Prayer-book were torn to pieces, and Mass said once more at the altar of St. Cuthbert, before the Earls pushed on to Doncaster with an army which soon swelled to thousands of men. Their cry was "to reduce all causes of religion to the old custom and usage;" and the Earl of Sussex, her general in the north, wrote frankly to Elizabeth that "there were not ten gentlemen in Yorkshire that did allow [approve] her proceedings in the cause of religion." But he was as loyal as he was frank, and held York stoutly, while the Queen deprived the revolt of its most effective weapon by Mary's

Digitized by Google

hasty removal to a new prison at Coventry. The storm however broke as rapidly as it had gathered. The mass of the Catholics throughout the country made no sign; and the Earls no sooner halted irresolute in presence of this unexpected inaction than their army caught the panic and dispersed. Northumberland and Westmoreland fled, and were followed in their flight by Lord Dacre of Naworth, the greatest noble of the Border; while their miserable adherents paid for their disloyalty in bloodshed and ruin. The ruthless measures of repression which closed this revolt were the first breach in the clemency of Elizabeth's rule, but they were signs of terror which were not lost on her opponents. It was the general inaction of the Catholics which had foiled the hopes of the northern Earls; and Rome now did its best to stir them to activity by issuing a Bull of Excommunication and Deposition against the Queen, which was found nailed in a spirit of ironical defiance on the Bishop of London's door. The Catholics of the north withdrew stubbornly from the Anglican worship; while Mary, who had been foiled in new hopes of her restoration which had opened through the assassination of the Regent Murray by the refusal of the Scotch Lords to accept her, fell back on her old line of intrigue in England itself. From the defeated Catholics she turned to the body of Conservative peers at whose head stood the Duke of Norfolk, a man weak in temper, but important as the representative of the general reluctance to advance further in a purely Protestant direction. His dreams of a marriage with Mary were detected by Cecil, and checked by a short sojourn in the Tower; but his correspondence with the Queen was renewed on his release, and ended in an appeal to Philip for the intervention of a Spanish army. At the head of this appeal stood the name of Mary; while Norfolk's name was followed by those of many lords of "the old blood," as the prouder peers styled themselves; and the significance of the request was heightened by gatherings of Catholic refugees at Antwerp round the leaders of the Northern Revolt. Enough of these conspiracies was discovered to rouse a fresh ardour in the menaced Protestants. The Parliament met to pass an act of attainder against the northern Earls, and to declare the introduction of Papal Bulls into the country an act of high treason. The rising indignation against Mary, as "the daughter of Debate, who discord fell doth sow," was shown in a statute, which declared any person who laid claim to the Crown during the Queen's life-time incapable of ever succeeding to it. The disaffection of the Catholics was met by imposing on all magistrates and public officers the obligation of subscribing to the Articles of Faith, a measure which in fact transferred the administration of justice and public order to their Protestant opponents. Meanwhile Norfolk's treason ripened into an elaborate plot. Philip had promised aid should the revolt actually break out; but the clue to these negotiations had

1570.

1571.

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV. ENGLAND AND MARY STUART. 1560-1572.

long been in Cecil's hands, and before a single step could be taken towards the practical realization of his schemes of ambition, they were foiled by Norfolk's arrest. With his death and that of Northumberland, who followed him to the scaffold, the dread of a revolt within the realm, which had so long hung over England, passed quietly away. The failure of the two attempts not only showed the weakness and disunion of the party of discontent and reaction, but it revealed the weakness of all party feeling before the rise of a national temper which was springing naturally out of the peace of Elizabeth's reign, and which a growing sense of danger to the order and prosperity around it was fast turning into a passionate loyalty to the Queen. It was not merely against Cecil's watchfulness or Elizabeth's cunning that Mary and Philip and the Percies dashed themselves in vain; it was against a new England.

1572.

### Section V.—The England of Elizabeth.

[*Authorities.*—For our constitutional history during this period we have D'Ewes' Journals, and Townshend's "Journal of Parliamentary Proceedings, from 1580 to 1601," the first detailed account we possess of the proceedings of our House of Commons. The general survey given by Hallam ("Constitutional History") is as judicious as it is able. For trade, &c., we may consult Macpherson's "Annals of Commerce," and the section on it in the "Pictorial History of England." Some valuable details are added by Mr. Froude. The general literary history is given by Craik ("History of English Literature"), who has devoted a separate work to Spenser and his times; and the sober but narrow estimate of Mr. Hallam ("Literary History") may be contrasted with the more brilliant though less balanced comments of M. Taine on the writers of the Renascence.]

**Elizabeth and the Poor Laws.**

"I have desired," Elizabeth said proudly to her Parliament, "to have the obedience of my subjects by love, and not by compulsion." It was a love fairly won by justice and good government. Buried as she seemed in foreign negotiations and intrigues, Elizabeth was above all an English sovereign. She devoted herself ably and energetically to the task of civil administration. She had hardly mounted the throne, indeed, when she faced the problem of social discontent. Time, and the natural development of new branches of industry, were working quietly for the relief of the glutted labour-market; but, as we have seen under the Protectorate, a vast mass of disorder still existed in England, which found a constant ground of resentment in the enclosures and evictions which accompanied the progress of agricultural change. It was on this host of "broken men" that every rebellion could count for support; their mere existence indeed was an encouragement to civil war, while in peace their presence was felt in the insecurity of life and property, in gangs of marauders which held whole counties in terror, and in "sturdy beggars" who stripped travellers on the road.

Digitized by Google

Under Elizabeth, as under her predecessors, the terrible measures of repression, whose uselessness More had in vain pointed out, went pitilessly on: we find the magistrates of Somersetshire capturing a gang of a hundred at a stroke, hanging fifty at once on the gallows and complaining bitterly to the Council of the necessity for waiting till the Assizes before they could enjoy the spectacle of the fifty others hanging beside them. But the issue of a Royal commission to enquire into the whole matter enabled the Government to deal with the difficulty in a wiser and more effectual way. The old powers to enforce labour on the idle, and settlement on the vagrant class, were continued; but a distinction was for the first time drawn between these and the impotent and destitute persons who had been confounded with them; and each town and parish was held responsible for the relief of its indigent and disabled poor, as it had long been responsible for the employment of able-bodied mendicants. When voluntary contributions proved insufficient for this purpose, the justices in sessions were enabled by statute to assess all persons in town or parish who refused to contribute in proportion to their ability. The principles embodied in these measures, the principle of local responsibility for local distress, and that of a distinction between the pauper and the vagabond, were more clearly defined in a statute which marked the middle period of Elizabeth's reign. By this Act houses of correction were ordered to be established for the punishment and amendment of the vagabond class by means of compulsory labour; while the power to levy and assess a general rate in each parish for the relief of the poor was transferred from the justices to its churchwardens. The well-known Act which matured and finally established this system, the 43rd of Elizabeth, remained the base of our system of pauper-administration until a time within the recollection of living men. Whatever flaws a later experience has found in these measures, their wise and humane character formed a striking contrast to the legislation which had degraded our statute-book from the date of the Statute of Labourers; and their efficacy at the time was proved by the entire cessation of the great social danger against which they were intended to provide.

1562.

1577.

1601.

**Progress of the Country.**

Its cessation however was owing, not merely to law, but to the natural growth of wealth and industry throughout the country. The change in the mode of cultivation, whatever social embarrassment it might bring about, undoubtedly favoured production. Not only was a larger capital brought to bear upon the land, but the mere change in the system brought about a taste for new and better modes of agriculture; the breed of horses and of cattle was improved, and a far greater use made of manure and dressings. One acre under the new system produced, it was said, as much as two under the old. As a more careful and constant cultivation was introduced, a greater number of hands were required on every farm; and much of the



Digitized by Google

surplus labour which had been flung off the land in the commencement of the new system was thus recalled to it. But a far more efficient agency in absorbing the unemployed was found in the development of manufactures. The linen trade was as yet of small value, and that of silk-weaving was only just introduced. But the woollen manufacture had become an important element in the national wealth. England no longer sent her fleeces to be woven in Flanders and to be dyed at Florence. The spinning of yarn, the weaving, fulling, and dyeing of cloth, was spreading rapidly from the towns over the country-side. The worsted trade, of which Norwich was the centre, extended over the whole of the Eastern counties. The farmers' wives began everywhere to spin their wool from their own sheep's backs into a coarse "home-spun." The South and the West still remained the great seats of industry and of wealth, the great homes of mining and manufacturing activity. The iron manufactures were limited to Kent and Sussex, though their prosperity in this quarter was already threatened by the growing scarcity of the wood which fed their furnaces, and by the exhaustion of the forests of the weald. Cornwall was then, as now, the sole exporter of tin; and the exportation of its copper was just beginning. The broadcloths of the West claimed the palm among the woollen stuffs of England. The Cinque Ports held almost a monopoly of the commerce of the Channel. Every little harbour, from the Foreland to the Land's End, sent out its fleet of fishing-boats, manned with the bold seamen who furnished crews for Drake and the Buccaneers. But in the reign of Elizabeth the poverty and inaction to which the North had been doomed since the fall of the Roman rule begins at last to be broken. We see the first signs of the coming revolution which has transferred English manufactures and English wealth to the north of the Mersey and the Humber, in the mention which now meets us of the friezes of Manchester, the coverlets of York, and the dependence of Halifax on its cloth-trade.

**English Commerce.**

The growth, however, of English commerce far outstripped that of its manufactures. We must not judge of it, indeed, by any modern standard; for the whole population of the country can hardly have exceeded five or six millions, and the burthen of all the vessels engaged in ordinary commerce was estimated at little more than fifty thousand tons. The size of the vessels employed in it would now-a-days seem insignificant; a modern collier brig is probably as large as the biggest merchant vessel which then sailed from the port of London. But it was under Elizabeth that English commerce began the rapid career of development which has made us the carriers of the world. By far the most important branch of it was with Flanders; Antwerp and Bruges were in fact the general marts of the world in the early part of the sixteenth century, and the annual export of English wool and

Digitized by Google

drapery to their markets was estimated at a sum of more than two millions in value. It was with the ruin of Antwerp, at the time of its siege and capture by the Duke of Parma, that the commercial supremacy of our own capital may be said to have been first established. A third of the merchants and manufacturers of the ruined city are said to have found a refuge on the banks of the Thames. The export trade to Flanders died away as London developed into the general mart of Europe, where the gold and sugar of the New World were found side by side with the cotton of India, the silks of the East, and the woollen stuffs of England itself. The foundation of the 1566. Royal Exchange by Sir Thomas Gresham was a mark of the commercial progress of the time. Not only was the old trade of the world transferred in great part to the English Channel, but the sudden burst of national vigour found new outlets for its activity. The Venetian carrying fleet still touched at Southampton; but as far back as the reign of Henry the Seventh a commercial treaty had been concluded with Florence, and the trade with the Mediterranean which had begun under Richard the Third constantly took a wider development. The intercourse between England and the Baltic ports had hitherto been kept up by the Hanseatic merchants; but the extinction of their London depôt, the Steel Yard, at this time, was a sign that this trade too had now passed into English hands. The growth of Boston and Hull marked an increase of commercial intercourse with the North. The prosperity of Bristol, which depended in great measure on the trade with Ireland, was stimulated by the conquest and colonization of that island at the close of the Queen's reign and the beginning of her successor's. The dream of a northern passage to 1553. India opened up a trade with a land as yet unknown. Of the three ships which sailed under Richard Willoughby to realize this dream, two were found afterwards frozen with their crews and their hapless commander on the coast of Lapland; but the third, under Richard Chancellor, made its way safely to the White Sea, and by its discovery of Archangel created the trade with Russia. A more lucrative traffic had already begun with the coast of Guinea, to whose gold dust and ivory the merchants of Southampton owed their wealth; but the guilt of the Slave Trade which sprung out of it rests with John Hawkins, whose arms (a demi-moor, proper, bound with a 1562. cord) commemorated his priority in the transport of negroes from Africa to the labour-fields of the New World. The fisheries of the Channel and the German Ocean gave occupation to the numerous ports which lined the coast from Yarmouth to Plymouth Haven; Bristol and Chester were rivals in the fisheries of Ulster; and the voyage of Sebastian Cabot from the former port to the mainland of North America had called its vessels to the stormy ocean of the North. From the time of Henry the Eighth the number of English



Digitized by Google

**Wealth and Social Progress.**

boats engaged on the cod-banks of Newfoundland steadily increased, and at the close of Elizabeth's reign the seamen of Biscay found English rivals in the whale-fishery of the Polar seas.

What Elizabeth really contributed to this commercial development was the peace and social order from which it sprang, and the thrift which spared the purses of her subjects by enabling her to content herself with the ordinary resources of the Crown. She lent, too, a ready patronage to the new commerce, she shared in its speculations, she considered its extension and protection as a part of public policy, and she sanctioned the formation of the great Merchant Companies which could then alone secure the trader against wrong or injustice in distant countries. The Merchant-Adventurers of London, a body which had existed long before, and had received a charter of incorporation under Henry the Seventh, furnished a model for the Russian Company, and the Company which absorbed the new commerce to the Indies. But it was not wholly with satisfaction that either Elizabeth or her ministers watched the social change which wealth was producing around them. They feared the increased expenditure and comfort which necessarily followed it, as likely to impoverish the land and to eat out the hardihood of the people. "England spendeth more on wines in one year," complained Cecil, "than it did in ancient times in four years." The disuse of salt-fish and the greater consumption of meat marked the improvement which was taking place among the agricultural classes. Their rough and wattled farmhouses were being superseded by dwellings of brick and stone. Pewter was replacing the wooden trenchers of the earlier yeomanry; there were yeomen who could boast of a fair show of silver plate. It is from this period, indeed, that we can first date the rise of a conception which seems to us now a peculiarly English one, the conception of domestic comfort. The chimney-corner, so closely associated with family life, came into existence with the general introduction of chimneys, a feature rare in ordinary houses at the beginning of this reign. Pillows, which had before been despised by the farmer and the trader as fit only "for women in child-bed," were now in general use. Carpets superseded the filthy flooring of rushes. The lofty houses of the wealthier merchants, their parapeted fronts, their costly wainscoting, the cumbrous but elaborate beds, the carved staircases, the quaintly figured gables, not only broke the mean appearance which had till then characterized English towns, but marked the rise of a new middle and commercial class which was to play its part in later history. A transformation of an even more striking kind proclaimed the extinction of the feudal character of the noblesse. Gloomy walls and serried battlements disappeared from the dwellings of the gentry. The strength of the mediæval fortress gave way to the pomp and grace of the Elizabethan Hall. Knowle, Longleat, Burleigh and Hatfield, Hardwick and

Digitized by Google

Audley End, are familiar instances of the social as well as architectural change which covered England with buildings where the thought of defence was abandoned for that of domestic comfort and refinement. We still gaze with pleasure on their picturesque line of gables, their fretted fronts, their gilded turrets and fanciful vanes, their castellated gateways, the jutting oriels from which the great noble looked down on his new Italian garden, its stately terraces, and broad flights of steps, its vases and fountains, its quaint mazes, its formal walks, its lines of yews cut into grotesque shapes in hopeless rivalry of the cypress avenues of the South. It was the Italian refinement of life which remodelled the interior of such houses, raised the principal apartments to an upper floor—a change to which we owe the grand staircases of the time—surrounded the quiet courts by long "galleries of the presence," crowned the rude hearth with huge chimney-pieces adorned with fauns and cupids, with quaintly interlaced monograms and fantastic arabesques, hung tapestries on the walls, and crowded each chamber with quaintly carved chairs and costly cabinets. The life of the Middle Ages concentrated itself in the vast castle hall, where the baron looked from his upper daïs on the retainers who gathered at his board. But the great households were fast breaking up; and the whole feudal economy disappeared when the lord of the household withdrew with his family into his "parlour" or "withdrawing-room," and left the hall to his dependants. He no longer rode at the head of his servants, but sate apart in the newly-introduced "coach." The prodigal use of glass became a marked feature in the domestic architecture of the time, and one whose influence on the general health of the people can hardly be over-estimated. Long lines of windows stretched over the fronts of the new manor halls. Every merchant's house had its oriel. "You shall have sometimes," Lord Bacon grumbled, "your houses so full of glass, that we cannot tell where to come to be out of the sun or the cold." But the prodigal enjoyment of light and sunshine was a mark of the temper of the age. The lavishness of a new wealth united with a lavishness of life, a love of beauty, of colour, of display, to revolutionize English dress. The Queen's three thousand robes were rivalled in their bravery by the slashed velvets, the ruffs, the jewelled purpoints of the courtiers around her. Men "wore a manor on their backs." The old sober notions of thrift melted before the strange revolutions of fortune wrought by the New World. Gallants gambled away a fortune at a sitting, and sailed off to make a fresh one in the Indies. Visions of galleons loaded to the brim with pearls and diamonds and ingots of silver, dreams of El Dorados where all was of gold, threw a haze of prodigality and profusion over the imagination of the meanest seaman. The wonders, too, of the New World kindled a burst of extravagant fancy in the Old. The strange

Digitized by Google

medley of past and present which distinguishes its masques and feastings only reflected the medley of men's thoughts. Pedantry, novelty, the allegory of Italy, the chivalry of the Middle Ages, the mythology of Rome, the English bear-fight, pastorals, superstition, farce, all took their turn in the entertainment which Lord Leicester provided for the Queen at Kenilworth. A "wild man" from the Indies chanted her praises, and Echo answered him. Elizabeth turned from the greetings of sibyls and giants to deliver the enchanted lady from her tyrant "Sans Pitie." Shepherdesses welcomed her with carols of the spring, while Ceres and Bacchus poured their corn and grapes at her feet.

**The Revival of English Literature.**

It was to this turmoil of men's minds, this wayward luxuriance and prodigality of fancy, that we owe the revival of English letters under Elizabeth. Here, as elsewhere, the Renascence found vernacular literature all but dead, poetry reduced to the doggrel of Skelton, history to the annals of Fabyan or Hall; and the overpowering influence of the new models, both of thought and style, which it gave to the world in the writers of Greece and Rome, was at first felt only as a fresh check to the dreams of any revival of English poetry or prose. Though England, indeed, shared more than any European country in the political and ecclesiastical results of the New Learning, in mere literary results it stood far behind the rest of Europe—Italy, or Germany, or France. More alone ranks among the great classical scholars of the sixteenth century. Classical learning, indeed, all but perished at the Universities in the storm of the Reformation, nor did it revive there till the close of Elizabeth's reign. Insensibly, however, the influences of the Renascence were fertilizing the intellectual soil of England for the rich harvest that was to come. The growth of the grammar schools was realizing the dream of Sir Thomas More, and bringing the middle-classes, from the squire to the petty tradesman, into contact with the masters of Greece and Rome. The love of travel, which became so remarkable a characteristic of Elizabeth's day, quickened the intelligence of the wealthier nobles. "Home-keeping youths," says Shakspere in words that mark the time, "have ever homely wits," and a tour over the Continent was just becoming part of the education of a gentleman. Fairfax's version of Tasso, Harrington's version of Ariosto, were signs of the influence which the literature of Italy, the land to which travel led most frequently, exerted on English minds. The writers of Greece and Rome began at last to tell upon England when they were popularized by a crowd of translations. Chapman's noble version of Homer stands high above its fellows, but all the greater poets and historians of the classical world were turned into English before the close of the sixteenth century. It is characteristic, perhaps, of England that historical literature was the first to rise from its long death, though the form in which it rose marked forcibly the difference between the

Digitized by Google

world in which it had perished and that in which it re-appeared. During the Middle Ages the world had been without a past, save the shadowy and unknown past of early Rome; and annalist and chronicler told the story of the years which went before, as a preface to his tale of the present, but without a sense of any difference between them. But the great religious, social, and political change which had passed over England under the New Monarchy had broken the continuity of its life; and the depth of the rift between the two ages is seen by the way in which History passes on its revival under Elizabeth from the mediæval form of pure narrative to its modern form of an investigation and reconstruction of the past. The new interest which attached to the bygone world led to the collection of its annals, their reprinting, and embodiment in an English shape. It was his desire to give the Elizabethan Church a basis in the past, as much as any pure zeal for letters, which induced Archbishop Parker to lead the way in the first of these labours. The collection of historical manuscripts which, following in the track of Leland, he rescued from the wreck of the monastic libraries, created a school of antiquarian imitators, whose research and industry has preserved for us almost every work of permanent historical value which existed before the Dissolution of the Monasteries. To his publication of some of our earlier chronicles we owe the series of similar publications which bear the name of Camden, Twysden, and Gale, and which are now receiving their completion in the works issued by the Master of the Rolls. But as a branch of literature, English History in the new shape which we have noted began in the work of the poet Daniel. The chronicles of Stowe and Speed, who preceded him, are simple records of the past, often copied almost literally from the annals they used, and utterly without style or arrangement; while Daniel, inaccurate and superficial as he is, gave his story a literary form and embodied it in a pure and graceful prose. Two larger works at the close of Elizabeth's reign, the "History of the Turks" by Knolles and Raleigh's vast but unfinished plan of the "History of the World," showed the widening of historic interest beyond the merely national bounds to which it had hitherto been confined.

**Italy and English Literature.**

A far higher development of our literature sprang from the growing influence which Italy, as we have seen, was exerting, partly through travel and partly through its poetry and romances, on the manners and taste of the time. Men made more account of a story of Boccaccio's, it was said, than a story from the Bible. The dress, the speech, the manners of Italy became objects of almost passionate imitation, and of an imitation not always of the wisest or noblest kind. To Ascham it seemed like "the enchantment of Circe brought out of Italy to mar men's manners in England." "An Italianate Englishmen," ran

Digitized by Google

the harder proverb of Italy itself, "is an incarnate devil." The literary form which this imitation took seemed at any rate absolutely absurd. John Lyly, distinguished both as a dramatist and a poet, laid aside the very tradition of English style for a style modelled on the decadence of Italian prose. Euphuism, as the new fashion has been styled from the prose romance of Euphues in which Lyly originated it, is best known to modern readers by the pitiless caricature with which Shakspere quizzed its pedantry, its affectation, the meaningless monotony of its far-fetched phrases, the absurdity of its extravagant conceits. Its representative, Armado in "Love's Labour's Lost," is "a man of fire-new words, fashion's own knight," "that hath a mint of phrases in his brain; one whom the music of his own vain tongue doth ravish like enchanting harmony." But its very extravagance sprang from the general burst of delight in the new resources of thought and language which literature felt to be at its disposal; and the new sense of literary beauty which its affectation, its love of a "mint of phrases" and the "music of its ever vain tongue" discloses, the new sense of pleasure in delicacy or grandeur of phrase, in the structure and arrangement of sentences, in what has been termed the atmosphere of words, was a sense out of which style was itself to spring. For a time, Euphuism had it all its own way. Elizabeth was the most affected and detestable of Euphuists; and "that beauty in Court which could not parley Euphuism," a courtier of Charles the First's time tells us, "was as little regarded as she that now there speaks not French." The fashion, however, passed away, but the "Arcadia" of Sir Philip Sidney shows the wonderful advance which prose had made. Sidney, the nephew of Lord Leicester, was the idol of his time, and perhaps no figure reflects the age more fully and more beautifully. Fair as he was brave, quick of wit as of affection, noble and generous in temper, dear to Elizabeth as to Spenser, the darling of the Court and of the camp, his learning and his genius made him the centre of the literary world which was springing into birth on English soil. He had travelled in France and Italy, he was master alike of the older learning and of the new discoveries of astronomy. Bruno dedicated to him as to a friend his metaphysical speculations; he was familiar with the drama of Spain, the poems of Ronsard, the sonnets of Italy. He combined the wisdom of a grave councillor with the romantic chivalry of a knight-errant. "I never heard the old story of Percy and Douglas," he says, "that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet." He flung away his life to save the English army in Flanders, and as he lay dying they brought a cup of water to his fevered lips. Sidney bade them give it to a soldier who was stretched on the ground beside him. "Thy necessity," he said, "is greater than mine." The whole of Sidney's nature, his chivalry and

Digitized by Google

his learning, his thirst for adventures, his tendency to extravagance, his freshness of tone, his tenderness and childlike simplicity of heart, his affectation and false sentiment, his keen sense of pleasure and delight, pours itself out in the pastoral medley, forced, tedious, and yet strangely beautiful, of his "Arcadia." In his "Defence of Poetry" the youthful exuberance of the romancer has passed into the earnest vigour and grandiose stateliness of the rhetorician. But whether in the one work or the other, the flexibility, the music, the luminous clearness of Sidney's style remains the same. But the quickness and vivacity of English prose was first developed in the school of Italian imitators who appeared in Elizabeth's later years. The origin of English fiction is to be found in the tales and romances with which Greene and Nash crowded the market, models for which they found in the Italian novels. The brief form of these novelettes soon led to the appearance of the "pamphlet;" and a new world of readers was seen in the rapidity with which the stories or scurrilous libels which passed under this name were issued, and the greediness with which they were devoured. It was the boast of Greene that in the eight years before his death he had produced forty pamphlets. "In a night or a day would he have yarked up a pamphlet, as well as in seven years, and glad was that printer that might be blest to pay him dear for the very dregs of his wit." Modern eyes see less of the wit than of the dregs in the works of Greene and his compeers; but the attacks which Nash directed against the Puritans and his rivals were the first English works which shook utterly off the pedantry and extravagance of Euphuism. In his lightness, his facility, his vivacity, his directness of speech, we have the beginning of popular literature. It had descended from the closet to the street, and the very change implied that the street was ready to receive it. The abundance, indeed, of printers and of printed books at the close of the Queen's reign, shows that the world of readers and writers had widened far beyond the small circle of scholars and courtiers with which it began.

**Elizabethan England and the Crown.**

We shall have to review at a later time the great poetic burst for which this intellectual advance was paving the way, and the moral and religious change which was passing over the country through the progress of Puritanism. But both the intellectual and the religious impulse of the age united with the influence of its growing wealth to revive a spirit of independence in the nation at large, a spirit which it was impossible for Elizabeth to understand, but the strength of which her wonderful tact enabled her to feel. Long before any open conflict arose between the people and the Crown, we see her instinctive perception of the change around her in the modifications, conscious or unconscious, which she introduced into the system of the New Monarchy. Of its usurpations on English liberty she abandoned

Digitized by Google

none, but she curtailed and softened down almost all. She tampered, as her predecessors had tampered, with personal freedom; there was the same straining of statutes and coercion of juries in political trials as before, and an arbitrary power of imprisonment was still exercised by the Council. The duties she imposed on cloth and sweet wines were an assertion of her right of arbitrary taxation. Royal proclamations constantly assumed the force of law. In one part of her policy indeed Elizabeth seemed to fall resolutely back from the constitutional attitude assumed by the Tudor sovereigns. Ever since Cromwell's time the Parliament had been convened almost year by year as a great engine of justice and legislation, but Elizabeth recurred to the older jealousy of the two Houses which had been entertained by Edward the Fourth, Henry the Seventh, and Wolsey. Her Parliaments were summoned at intervals of never less than three, and sometimes of nine years, and never save on urgent necessity. Practically however the Royal power was wielded with a caution and moderation that showed the sense of a gathering difficulty in the full exercise of it. The ordinary course of justice was left undisturbed. The jurisdiction of the Council was asserted almost exclusively over the Catholics; and defended, in their case, as a precaution against pressing dangers. The proclamations issued were temporary in character and of small importance. The two duties imposed were so slight as to pass almost unnoticed in the general satisfaction at Elizabeth's abstinence from internal taxation. The benevolences and forced loans which brought home the sense of tyranny to the subjects of her predecessors were absolutely abandoned. She treated the Privy Seals, which on emergencies she issued for advances to her Exchequer, simply as anticipations of her revenue (like our own Exchequer Bills), and punctually repaid them. The monopolies with which she fettered trade proved a more serious grievance; but during her earlier reign they were looked on as a part of the system of Merchant Associations, which were at that time regarded as necessary for the regulation and protection of the growing commerce. Her thrift enabled her to defray the current expenses of the Crown from its ordinary revenues. But the thrift was dictated, not so much by economy, as by the desire to avoid any summoning of Parliament. The Queen saw that the "management" of the two Houses, so easy to Cromwell, was becoming more difficult every day. The rise of a new nobility, enriched by the spoils of the Church and trained to political life among the perils of the religious changes, had given a fresh vigour to the Lords. A curious proof of the increased wealth of the country gentry, as well as of their increased desire to obtain a seat in the Commons, was shown by the cessation at this time of the old practice of payment of members by their constituencies. A change too in the borough representation, which had

Digitized by Google

long been in progress, but was now for the first time legally recognized, tended greatly to increase the vigour and independence of the Lower House. The members for boroughs had been required by the terms of the older writs to be chosen among their burgesses; and an Act of Henry the Fifth gave this custom the force of law. But the passing of the Act shows that it was already widely infringed; and by the time of Elizabeth most borough seats were filled by strangers, often nominees of the great landowners round, but for the most part men of wealth and blood, whose aim in entering Parliament was a purely political one. So changed, indeed, was the tone of the Commons, even as early as the close of Henry's reign, that Edward and Mary both fell back on the prerogative of the Crown to create boroughs, and summoned members from fresh constituencies, which were often mere villages, and wholly in the hands of the Crown. But this "packing of the House" had still to be continued by their successor. The large number of such members whom Elizabeth called into the Commons, sixty-two in all, was a proof of the increasing difficulty which was now experienced by the Government in securing a working majority.

**Elizabeth and the Parliament.**

Had Elizabeth lived in quiet times her thrift would have saved her from the need of summoning Parliament at all. But the perils of her reign drove her at rare intervals to the demand of a subsidy, and each demand of a subsidy forced her to assemble the Houses. Constitutionally the policy of Cromwell had had this special advantage, that at the very crisis of our liberties it had acknowledged and confirmed by repeated instances, for its own purposes of arbitrary rule, the traditional right of Parliament to grant subsidies, to enact laws, and to consider and petition for the redress of grievances. These rights remained, while the power which had turned them into a mere engine of despotism was growing weaker year by year. Not only did the Parliament of Elizabeth put its powers in force as fully as the Parliament of Cromwell, but the historical tendency which we have noticed, the tendency of the age to fall back on former times for precedents, soon led to a reclaiming of privileges which had died away under the New Monarchy. During the reign of Elizabeth the House of Commons gradually succeeded in protecting its members from all arrest during its sessions, save by permission of the House itself, and won the rights of punishing and expelling member for crimes committed within the House, and of determining all matters relating to their election. The more important claim of freedom of speech brought on a series of petty conflicts which showed Elizabeth's instincts of despotism, as well as her sense of the new power which despotism had to face. In the great crisis of the Darnley marriage Mr. Dutton defied a Royal prohibition to mention the subject of the succession by a hot denunciation of the Scottish claim. Elizabeth at once

1566.

Digitized by Google

1571. ordered him into arrest, but the Commons prayed for leave "to confer upon their liberties," and the Queen ordered his release. In the same spirit she commanded Mr. Strickland, the mover of a bill for the reform of the Common Prayer, to appear no more in Parliament; but as soon as she perceived that the temper of the Commons was bent upon his restoration the command was withdrawn. On the other hand, the Commons still shrank from any violent defiance of Elizabeth's assumption of control over freedom of speech. The bold

1575. protest of a Puritan member, Peter Wentworth, against it was met by the House itself with a committal to the Tower: and the yet bolder questions which he addressed to a later Parliament, "whether this Council is not a place for every member of the same freely and without control, by bill or speech, to utter any of the griefs of the

1588. Commonwealth?" brought on him a fresh imprisonment at the hands of the Council, which lasted till the dissolution of the Parliament, and with which the Commons declined to interfere. But while vacillating in its assertion of the rights of individual speakers, the House steadily claimed for itself the right to consider three cardinal subjects, the treatment of which had been regarded by every Tudor sovereign as lying exclusively within the competence of the Crown. "Matters of State," as the higher political questions of the time were called, were jealously reserved for the Royal cognizance alone; but the question of the Succession became too vital to English freedom and English religion to remain confined within Elizabeth's council chamber. At the opening of her reign the Commons humbly petitioned for the declaration of a successor and for the Queen's marriage; and in spite of her rebuke and evasive answers, both Houses on their meeting four years after joined in the same demand. Her consciousness of the real dangers of such a request united with her arbitrary temper to move Elizabeth to a burst of passionate anger. The marriage indeed she promised, but she peremptorily forbade the subject of the succession to be approached. Wentworth at once rose in the Commons to know wheher such a prohibition was not "against the liberties of Parliament?" and the question was followed by a hot debate. A fresh message from the Queen commanded "that there should be no further argument," but the message was met by a request for freedom of deliberation. Elizabeth's prudence taught her that retreat was necessary; she protested that "she did not mean to prejudice any part of the liberties heretofore granted to them;" she softened the order of silence into a request; and the Commons, won by the graceful concession to a loyal assent, received her message "most joyfully and with most hearty prayers and thanks for the same." But the victory was none the less a real one. No such struggle had taken place between the Commons and the Crown since the beginning of the New Monarchy, and the struggle had ended in the virtual defeat of the Crown. It

Digitized by Google

was the prelude to a claim yet more galling to Elizabeth. Like the rest of the Tudor sovereigns, she held her ecclesiastical supremacy to be a purely personal power, with her administration of which neither Parliament nor even her Council had any right to interfere. But the exclusion of the Catholic gentry through the Test Acts, and the growth of Puritanism among the landowners as a class, gave more and more a Protestant tone to the Commons; and it was easy to remember that the Supremacy which was thus jealously guarded from Parliamentary interference had been conferred on the Crown by a Parliamentary statute. Here, however, the Queen, as the religious representative of the two parties who made up her subjects, stood on firmer ground than the Commons, who represented but one of them. And she used her advantage boldly. The bills proposed by the Puritans for the reform of the Common Prayer were at her command delivered up into her hands and suppressed. Wentworth, the most outspoken of his party, was, as we have seen, imprisoned in the Tower: and in a later Parliament the Speaker was expressly forbidden to receive bills "for reforming the Church, and transforming the Commonwealth." In spite of these obstacles, however, the effort for reform continued, and though crushed by the Crown or set aside by the Lords, ecclesiastical bills were presented in every Parliament. A better fortune awaited the Commons in their attack on the Royal prerogative in matters of trade. Complaints made of the licenses and monopolies, by which internal and external commerce were fettered, were at first repressed by a Royal reprimand as matters neither pertaining to the Commons nor within the compass of their understanding. When the subject was again stirred, nearly twenty years afterwards, Sir Edward Hoby was sharply rebuked by "a great personage" for his complaint of the illegal exactions made by the Exchequer. But the bill which he promoted was sent up to the Lords in spite of this, and at the close of Elizabeth's reign the storm of popular indignation which had been roused by the growing grievance nerved the Commons to a decisive struggle. It was in vain that the ministers opposed the bill for the Abolition of Monopolies, and after four days of vehement debate the tact of Elizabeth taught her to give way. She acted with her usual ability, declared her previous ignorance of the existence of the evil, thanked the House for its interference, and quashed at a single blow every monopoly that she had granted.

1572.

1593.

1601.

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE ARMADA. 1572-1588.

## Section VI.—The Armada. 1572—1588.

[*Authorities.*—As before for the general history of this reign. The state of the Catholics is described by Lingard ("History of England"), and the religious policy of Elizabeth criticised with remarkable fairness by Hallam ("Constitutional History").]

**The New Protestantism.**

The wonderful growth in wealth and social energy which we have described was accompanied by a remarkable change in the religious temper of the nation. It was in the years which we are traversing that England became firmly Protestant. The quiet decay of the traditionary Catholicism which formed the religion of three-fourths of the people at Elizabeth's accession is shown by the steady diminution in the number of recusants throughout her reign; and at its close the only parts of England where the old faith retained anything of its former vigour were the north and the extreme west, at that time the poorest and least populated parts of the kingdom. The main cause of the change lay undoubtedly in the gradual dying out of the Catholic priesthood, and the growth of a new Protestant clergy who supplied their place. The older parish priests, though they had almost to a man acquiesced in the changes of ritual and doctrine which the various phases of the Reformation imposed upon them, remained in heart utterly hostile to its spirit. As Mary had undone the changes of Edward, they hoped for a Catholic successor to undo the changes of Elizabeth; and in the meantime they were content to wear the surplice instead of the chasuble, and to use the Communion office instead of the Mass-book. But if they were forced to read the Homilies from the pulpit, the spirit of their teaching remained unchanged; and it was easy for them to cast contempt on the new services, till they seemed to old-fashioned worshippers a mere "Christmas game." But the lapse of twenty years did its work in emptying parsonage after parsonage, and the jealous supervision of Parker and the bishops ensured an inner as well as an outer conformity to the established faith in the clergy who took the place of the dying priesthood. The new parsons were for the most part not merely Protestant in belief and teaching, but ultra-Protestant. The old restrictions on the use of the pulpit were silently removed as the need for them past away, and the zeal of the young ministers showed itself in an assiduous preaching which moulded in their own fashion the religious ideas of the new generation. But their character had even a greater influence than their preaching. Under Henry the priests had for the most part been ignorant and sensual men; and the character of the clergy appointed by the greedy Protestants of Edward's reign was even worse than that of their Popish rivals. But the energy of the Primate, seconded as it was by the general increase of zeal

Digitized by Google

and morality at the time, did its work; and by the close of Elizabeth's reign the moral temper as well as the social character of the clergy had wholly changed. Scholars like Hooker, gentlemen like George Herbert, could now be found in the ranks of the priesthood, and the grosser scandals which had disgraced the clergy as a body for the most part disappeared. It was impossible for a Puritan libeller to bring against the ministers of Elizabeth's reign the charges of drunkenness and immorality which Protestant libellers had been able to bring against the priesthood of Henry's. But the influence of the new clergy was backed by a general revolution in English thought. We have already watched the first upgrowth of the new literature which was to find its highest types in Shakspere and Bacon. The grammar schools were diffusing a new knowledge and mental energy through the middle classes and among the country gentry. The tone of the Universities, no unfair test of the tone of the nation at large, changed wholly as the Queen's reign went on. At its opening Oxford was a nest of Papists, and sent its best scholars to feed the Catholic seminaries. At its close the University was a hot-bed of Puritanism, where the fiercest tenets of Calvin reigned supreme. The movement was no doubt hastened by the political circumstances of the time. Under the rule of Elizabeth loyalty became more and more a passion among Englishmen; and the Bull of Deposition placed Rome in the forefront of Elizabeth's foes. The conspiracies which festered around Mary were laid to the Pope's charge; he was known to be pressing on France and on Spain the invasion and conquest of the heretic kingdom; he was soon to bless the Armada. Every day made it harder for a Catholic to reconcile Catholicism with loyalty to his Queen or devotion to his country; and the mass of men, who are moved by sentiment rather than by reason, swung slowly round to the side which, whatever its religious significance might be, was the side of patriotism, of liberty against tyranny, of England against Spain. Whatever fire and energy was wanting to the new movement, was given at last by the atrocities which marked the Catholic triumph on the other side of the Channel. The horror of Alva's butcheries, or of the Massacre on St. Bartholomew's day, revived the memories of the bloodshed under Mary. The tale of Protestant sufferings was told with a wonderful pathos and picturesqueness by John Foxe, an exile during the persecution; and his "Book of Martyrs," which had been set up by Royal order in the churches for public reading, passed from the churches to the shelves of every English household. The trading classes of the towns had been the first to embrace the doctrines of the Reformation, but their Protestantism became a passion as the refugees of the Continent brought to shop and market their tale of outrage and blood. Thousands of Flemish exiles found a refuge in the Cinque Ports, a third of the Antwerp merchants were seen pacing

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI.
THE ARMADA.
1572-1588.

the new London Exchange, and a Church of French Huguenots found a home which it still retains in the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral.

**The Seminary Priests.**

In her ecclesiastical policy Elizabeth trusted mainly to time; and time, as we have seen, justified her trust. Her system of compromise both in faith and worship, of quietly replacing the old priesthood as it died out by Protestant ministers, of wearying recusants into at least outer conformity with the state-religion and attendance on the state-services by fines—a policy aided, no doubt, by the moral influences we have described—was gradually bringing England round to a new religious front. But the decay of Catholicism appealed strongly to the new spirit of Catholic zeal which, in its despair of aid from Catholic princes, was now girding itself for its own bitter struggle with heresy. Dr. Allen, a scholar who had been driven from Oxford by the test prescribed in the Act of Uniformity, had foreseen the results of the dying out of the Marian priests, and had set up a seminary at Douay to supply their place. The new college, liberally supported by the Catholic peers and supplied with pupils by a stream of refugees from Oxford, soon landed its "seminary priests" on English shores; and few as they were at first, their presence was at once felt in the check which it gave to the gradual reconciliation of the Catholic
1577. gentry to the English Church. No check could have been more galling to Elizabeth, and her resentment was quickened by the sense of a fresh danger. She had accepted from the first the issue of the Bull of Deposition as a declaration of war on the part of Rome, and she viewed the Douay priests simply as political emissaries of the Papacy. The comparative security of the Catholics from active persecution during the early part of her reign had arisen, as we have seen, partly from the sympathy and connivance of the gentry who acted as justices of the peace, but still more from her own religious indifference. But the Test Act placed the magistracy in Protestant hands; and as Elizabeth passed from indifference to suspicion, and from suspicion to terror, she no longer chose to restrain the bigotry around her. In quitting Eaton Hall, which she had visited in one of her pilgrimages, the Queen gave its master, young Rookwood, thanks for his entertainment and her hand to kiss. "But my Lord Chamberlain nobly and gravely understanding that Rookwood was excommunicate" for non-attendance at church, "called him before him, demanded of him how he durst presume to attempt her royal presence, he unfit to accompany any Christian person, forthwith said that he was fitter for a pair of stocks, commanded him out of Court, and yet to attend the Council's pleasure." The Council's pleasure was seen in his committal to the town prison at Norwich, while "seven more gentlemen of worship" were fortunate enough to escape with a simple sentence of arrest at their own homes. The Queen's terror became,

Digitized by Google

in fact, a panic in the nation at large. The few priests who landed from Douay were multiplied into an army of Papal emissaries, despatched to sow treason and revolt throughout the land. The Parliament, which had now through the working of the Test Act become a wholly Protestant body, save for the presence of a few Catholics among the peers, was summoned to meet the new danger, and declared the landing of the priests and the harbouring of them to be treason. The Act proved no idle menace; and the execution of Cuthbert Mayne, a young priest who was arrested in Cornwall, gave a terrible indication of the character of the struggle upon which Elizabeth was about to enter. She shrank, indeed, from the charge of religious persecution; she boasted of her abstinence from any interference with men's consciences; and Cecil, in his official defence of her policy, while declaring freedom of worship to be incompatible with religious order, boldly asserted the right of every English subject to perfect freedom of religious opinion. To modern eyes there is something even more revolting than open persecution in the policy which branded every Catholic priest as a traitor, and all Catholic worship as disloyalty; but the first step towards toleration was won when the Queen rested her system of repression on purely political grounds. Elizabeth was a persecutor, but she was the first English ruler who felt the charge of religious persecution to be a stigma on her rule; the first who distinctly disclaimed religious differences as a ground for putting men to death. It is fair, too, to acknowledge that there was a real political danger in the new missionaries. The efforts of the seminary priests were succeeded by those of a body whose existence was a standing threat to every Protestant throne. A large number of the Oxford refugees at Douay joined the order of the Jesuits, whose members were already famous for their blind devotion to the will and judgments of Rome; and the two ablest and most eloquent of these exiles, Campian, once a fellow of St. John's, and Parsons, once a fellow of Balliol, were selected as the heads of a Jesuit mission in England. 1580. For the moment their success was amazing. The eagerness shown to hear Campian was so great, that in spite of the denunciations of the Government, he was able to preach with hardly a show of concealment to a vast audience in Smithfield. From London the missionaries wandered in the disguise of captains or serving-men, or sometimes in the cassock of the English clergy, through many of the counties; and wherever they went the zeal of the Catholic gentry revived. The list of nobles reconciled to the old faith by the wandering apostles was headed by the name of Lord Oxford, Burghley's own son-in-law, and the proudest among English peers. The success of the Jesuits in undoing Elizabeth's work of compromise was shown in a more public way by the unanimity with which the Catholics withdrew from attendance at the national worship. As in the case of the seminary priests,



Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE ARMADA. 1572-1588.

however, the panic of the Protestants and of the Parliament far outran the greatness of the danger. The little group of missionaries was magnified by popular fancy into a host of disguised Jesuits; and the imaginary invasion was met by statutes which prohibited the saying of Mass even in private houses, increased the fine on recusants to twenty pounds a month, and enacted that "all persons pretending to any power of absolving subjects from their allegiance, or practising to withdraw them to the Romish religion, with all persons after the present session willingly so absolved or reconciled to the See of Rome, shall be guilty of High Treason." The way in which the vast powers conferred on the Crown by this statute were used by Elizabeth was not only characteristic in itself, but important as at once defining the policy to which, in theory at least, her successors adhered for more than a hundred years. No layman was brought to the bar or to the block under its provisions. The oppression of the Catholic gentry was limited to an exaction, more or less rigorous at different times, of the fines for recusancy or non-attendance at public worship. The work of bloodshed was reserved wholly for priests, and under Elizabeth this work was done with a ruthless energy which for the moment crushed the Catholic reaction. The Jesuits were tracked by Walsingham's spies, dragged from their hiding-places, and sent in batches to the Tower. So hot was the pursuit that Parsons was forced to fly across the Channel; while Campian was brought a prisoner through the streets of London, amidst the howling of the mob, and placed at the bar on the charge of treason. "Our religion only is our crime," was a plea which galled his judges; but the political danger of the Jesuit preaching was disclosed in his evasion of any direct reply, when questioned as to his belief in the validity of the excommunication and deposition of the Queen by the Papal See. The death of Campian was the prelude to a steady, pitiless effort at the extermination of his class. If we adopt the Catholic estimate of the time, the twenty years which followed saw the execution of two hundred priests, while a yet greater number perished in the filthy and fever-stricken gaols into which they were plunged. The work of reconciliation to Rome was arrested by this ruthless energy; but, on the other hand, the work which the priests had effected could not be undone. The system of quiet compulsion and conciliation to which Elizabeth had trusted for the religious reunion of her subjects was foiled; and the English Catholics, fined, imprisoned at every crisis of national danger, and deprived of their teachers by the prison and the gibbet, were severed more hopelessly than ever from the national Church.

1581.

**Elizabeth and Philip.**

But the effect of this bloodshed on the world without was far more violent, and productive of wider and greater results. The torture and death of the Jesuit martyrs sent a thrill of horror through the whole Catholic Church, and roused at last into action the sluggish hostility

Digitized by Google

of Spain. Spain was at this moment the mightiest of European powers. The discoveries of Columbus had given it the New World of the west; the conquests of Cortez and Pizarro poured into its treasury the plunder of Mexico and Peru; its galleons brought the rich produce of the Indies, their gold, their jewels, their ingots of silver, to the harbour of Cadiz. To the New World its King added the fairest and wealthiest portions of the Old; he was master of Naples and Milan—the richest and the most fertile districts of Italy, of the busy provinces of the Low Countries, of Flanders—the great manufacturing district of the time, and of Antwerp, which had become the central mart for the commerce of the world. His native kingdom, poor as it was, supplied him with the steadiest and the most daring soldiers that the world had seen since the fall of the Roman Empire. The renown of the Spanish infantry had been growing from the day when it flung off the onset of the French chivalry on the field of Ravenna; and the Spanish generals stood without rivals in their military skill, as they stood without rivals in their ruthless cruelty. The whole, too, of this enormous power was massed in the hands of a single man. Served as he was by able statesmen and subtle diplomatists, Philip of Spain was his own sole minister; labouring day after day, like a clerk, through the long years of his reign, amidst the papers which crowded his closet; but resolute to let nothing pass without his supervision, and to suffer nothing to be done save by his express command. It was his boast that everywhere in the vast compass of his dominions he was "an absolute King." It was to realize this idea of absolutism that he crushed the liberties of Arragon, as his father had crushed the liberties of Castile, and sent Alva to tread under foot the constitutional freedom of the Low Countries. His bigotry went hand in hand with his thirst for power. Italy and Spain lay hushed beneath the terror of the Inquisition, while Flanders was being purged of heresy by the stake and the sword. The shadow of this gigantic power fell like a deadly blight over Europe. The new Protestantism, like the new spirit of political liberty, saw its real foe in Philip. It was Spain, rather than the Guises, against which Coligni and the Huguenots struggled in vain; it was Spain with which William of Orange was wrestling for religious and civil freedom; it was Spain which was soon to plunge Germany into the chaos of the Thirty Years' War, and to which the Catholic world had for twenty years been looking, and looking in vain, for a victory over heresy in England. Vast, in fact, as Philip's resources were, they were drained by the yet vaster schemes of ambition into which his religion and his greed of power, as well as the wide distribution of his dominions, perpetually drew him. To coerce the weaker States of Italy, to preserve a commanding influence in Germany, to support Catholicism in France, to crush heresy in Flanders,



Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE ARMADA. 1572-1588.

to despatch one Armada against the Turk and another against Elizabeth, were aims mighty enough to exhaust even the power of the Spanish Monarchy. But it was rather on the character of Philip than on the exhaustion of his treasury that Elizabeth counted for success in the struggle which had so long been going on between them. The King's temper was slow, cautious even to timidity, losing itself continually in delays, in hesitations, in anticipating remote perils, in waiting for distant chances; and on the slowness and hesitation of his temper his rival had been playing ever since she mounted the throne. The diplomatic contest between the two was like the fight which England was soon to see between the ponderous Spanish galleon and the light pinnace of the buccaneers. The agility, the sudden changes of Elizabeth, her lies, her mystifications, though they failed to deceive Philip, puzzled and impeded his mind. But amidst all this cloud of intrigue the Queen's course had in reality been simple. In her earlier days France rivalled Spain in its greatness, and Elizabeth simply played the two rivals off against one another. She hindered France from giving effective aid to Mary Stuart by threats of an alliance with Spain; while she induced Philip to wink at her heresy, and to discourage the risings of the English Catholics, by playing on his dread of her alliance with France. But the tide of religious passion which had so long been held in check broke at last over its banks, and the political face of Europe was instantly changed.

1572. The Low Countries, driven to despair by the greed and persecution of Alva, rose in a revolt which after strange alternations of fortune gave to Europe the Republic of the United Provinces. The opening which their rising afforded to the ambition of France was at once seized by Coligni and the French Protestants, and used as a political engine to break the power which the Queen-mother Mary of Medicis exercised over Charles the Ninth. Charles was on the point of surrendering himself to ambition and the Huguenots, when Mary in revenge, or with the blind instinct of self-preservation, flung aside her old policy of balancing the two parties against one another. She threw herself on the side of the Guises, and ensured their triumph by lending herself to their massacre of the Protestants on St. Bartholomew's day. But though the long gathering clouds of religious hatred had broken, Elizabeth trusted to her dexterity to keep out of the storm. If France, torn with civil strife, had ceased to be a balance to Spain, she found a new balance in Flanders. Whatever enthusiasm the heroic struggle of the Prince of Orange excited among her subjects, it failed to move Elizabeth even for an instant from the path of cold self-interest. To her the revolt of the Netherlands was simply "a bridle of Spain, which kept war out of our own gate." At the darkest moment of the contest, when even William of Orange dreamed of abandoning all, and seeking in far-off seas a new home for liberty, the

Digitized by Google

Queen bent her energies to prevent him from finding succour in France. That the Provinces could in the end withstand Philip, neither she nor any English statesmen believed. They held that the struggle must close either in utter subjection of the Netherlands, or in their selling themselves for aid to France; and the accession of power which either result must give to one of her two Catholic foes the Queen was eager to avert. Her plan for averting it was by forcing the Provinces to accept the terms offered by Spain—a restoration, that is, of their constitutional privileges, accompanied by their submission to the Church. Peace on such a footing would not only restore English commerce, which suffered from the war; it would leave Flanders still formidable as a weapon against Philip. The freedom of the Provinces would be saved—and the religious question involved in a fresh submission to the yoke of Catholicism was one which Elizabeth was incapable of appreciating. To her the steady refusal of William the Silent to sacrifice his faith was as unintelligible as the steady bigotry of Philip in demanding such a sacrifice. It was of more immediate consequence that Philip's anxiety to avoid provoking an intervention on the part of England, which would destroy all hope of his success in Flanders, left her tranquil at home. Mary Stuart saw her hope of foreign aid disappear, at a time when the death of Norfolk and Northumberland removed the dread of civil war. At no moment had the Queen felt so secure against a blow from Philip as when Philip at last was forced to deliver his blow.

**The Sea-dogs.**

The control of events was, in fact, passing from the hands of statesmen and diplomatists; and the long period of suspense which their policy had won was ending in the clash of national and political passions. The rising fanaticism of the Catholic world, driven to frenzy by the martyrdom of the English Jesuits, broke down the caution and hesitation of Philip; while England set aside the balanced neutrality of Elizabeth, and pushed boldly forward to a contest which it felt to be inevitable. The public opinion, to which the Queen was so sensitive, took every day a bolder and more decided tone. When one of the last of her matrimonial intrigues threatened England with a Catholic sovereign in the Duke of Alençon, a younger son of the hated Catherine of Medicis, the popular indignation rose suddenly into a cry against "a Popish King" which the Queen dared not defy. Her cold indifference to the heroic struggle in Flanders was more than compensated by the enthusiasm it excited among the nation at large. The earlier Flemish refugees found a refuge in the Cinque Ports. The exiled merchants of Antwerp were welcomed by the merchants of London. While Elizabeth dribbled out her secret aid to the Prince of Orange, the London traders sent him half-a-million from their own purses, a sum equal to a year's revenue of the Crown. Volunteers stole across the Channel in increasing numbers to the aid

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE ARMADA. 1572-1588.

of the Dutch, till the five hundred Englishmen who fought in the beginning of the struggle rose to a brigade of five thousand, whose bravery turned one of the most critical battles of the war. Dutch privateers found shelter in English ports, and English vessels hoisted the flag of the States for a dash at the Spanish traders. The Protestant fervour rose steadily as "the best captains and soldiers" returned from the campaigns in the Low Countries to tell of Alva's atrocities, or as privateers brought back tales of English seamen who had been seized in Spain and the New World, to linger amidst the tortures of the Inquisition, or to die in its fires. In the presence of this steady drift of popular passion the diplomacy of Elizabeth became of little moment. If the Queen was resolute for peace, England was resolute for war. A new daring had arisen since the beginning of her reign, when Cecil and the Queen stood alone in their belief in England's strength, and when the diplomatists of Europe regarded her obstinate defiance of Spain as "madness." The whole people had soon caught the self-confidence and daring of their Queen. Four years after her accession the seamen of the Southern coast were lending their aid to the Huguenots; and the Channel swarmed with "sea-dogs," as they were called, who accepted letters of marque from the Prince of Condé and the French Protestants, and took heed neither of the complaints of the French Court nor of Elizabeth's own efforts at repression. Her efforts failed before the connivance of every man along the coast, of the port-officers of the Crown itself, who made profit out of the spoil, and of the gentry of the West, who were hand and glove with the adventurers. The temporary suspension of the French contest only drove the sea-dogs to the West Indies; for the Papal decree which gave the New World to Spain, and the threats of Philip against any Protestant who should visit its seas, fell idly on the ears of English seamen. It was in vain that their trading vessels were seized and the sailors flung into the dungeons of the Inquisition, "laden with irons, without sight of sun or moon." The profits of the trade were large enough to counteract its perils, and the bigotry of Philip was met by a bigotry as merciless as his own. Francis Drake, whose name became the terror of the Spanish Indies, was the son of a Protestant vicar in Kent, whose family had suffered for their religion in the time of the Six Articles; and his Puritanism went hand in hand with his love of adventure. To sell negroes to the planters, to kill Spaniards, to sack gold-ships was in the young
1577 seaman's mind the work of "the elect of God." He had conceived a daring design of penetrating into the Pacific, whose waters had never seen an English flag; and, backed by a company of adventurers, he set sail for the Southern seas in a vessel hardly as big as a Channel schooner, with a few yet smaller companions who fell away before the storms and perils of the voyage. But Drake with his one ship and

Digitized by Google

eighty men held boldly on; and passing the Straits of Magellan, untraversed as yet by any Englishman, swept the unguarded coast of Chili and Peru, loaded his bark with the gold-dust and silver-ingots of Potosi, and with the pearls, emeralds, and diamonds which formed the cargo of the great galleon that sailed once a year from Lima to Cadiz. With spoils of above half-a-million in value the daring adventurer steered undauntedly for the Moluccas, rounded the Cape of Good Hope, and after completing the circuit of the globe dropped anchor again in Plymouth harbour.

1580.

The romantic daring of Drake's voyage, and the vastness of the spoil, roused a general enthusiasm throughout England; but the welcome he received from Elizabeth on his return was accepted by Philip as an outrage which could only be expiated by war. The personal wrong was embittered in the year which followed by the persecution of the Jesuits, and by the outcry of the Catholic world against the King's selfish reluctance to avenge the blood of its martyrs. Sluggish as it was, his blood was fired at last by the defiance with which Elizabeth received all prayers for redress. She met his demand for Drake's surrender by knighting the freebooter, and by wearing in her crown the jewels he had offered her as a present. When the Spanish ambassador threatened that "matters would come to the cannon," she replied "quietly, in her most natural voice, as if she were telling a common story," wrote Mendoza, "that if I used threats of that kind she would fling me into a dungeon." It was in the same spirit that she rejected Philip's intercession on behalf of the Catholics, and for the relaxation of the oppressive laws against their worship. Outraged as he was, she believed that with Flanders still in revolt, and France longing for her alliance to enable it to seize the Low Countries, the King could not afford to quarrel with her; and her trust in his inactivity seemed justified by the jealousy with which he regarded, and succeeded in foiling, the project for a Catholic revolt which was to have followed a descent of the Guises on the English coast. But if Philip shielded Elizabeth from France, it was because he reserved England for his own ambition. The first vessels of the great fleet of invasion which was to take the name of the Armada were gathering slowly in the Tagus, when two remarkable events freed the King's hands for action by changing the face of European politics. The assassination of the Prince of Orange seemed to leave Flanders at his mercy, and the death of the Duke of Alençon left Henry of Navarre, the leader of the Huguenot party, heir of the crown of France. To prevent the triumph of heresy in the succession of a Protestant king, the Guises and the French Catholics rose at once in arms; but the Holy League which they formed rested mainly on the support of Philip. Philip therefore, so long as he supplied them with men and money, was secure on the side of France. At the same

**The Death of Mary Stuart**

1581.

1584

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE ARMADA. 1572-1588.

time the progress of his army under the Prince of Parma, and the divisions of the States after the loss of their great leader, promised a speedy reconquest of the Low Countries; and the fall of Antwerp after a gallant resistance convinced even Elizabeth of the need for action if the one "bridle to Spain which kept war out of our own gates" was to be saved. Lord Leicester was hurried to the Flemish coast with 8,000 men; but their forced inaction was chequered only
1585. by a disastrous skirmish at Zutphen, the fight in which Sidney fell, while Elizabeth was vainly striving to negotiate a peace between Philip and the States. Meanwhile dangers thickened round her in England itself. Maddened by persecution, by the hopelessness of rebellion within or of deliverance from without, the fiercer Catholics listened to schemes of assassination, to which the murder of William of Orange lent at the moment a terrible significance. The detection of Somerville, a fanatic who had received the Host before setting out for London "to shoot the Queen with his dagg," was followed by measures of natural severity, by the flight and arrest of Catholic gentry and peers, by a vigorous purification of the Inns of Court, where a few Catholics lingered, and by the despatch of fresh batches of priests to the block. The trial and death of Parry, a member of the House of Commons who had served in the Queen's household, on a similar charge, brought the Parliament together in a transport of horror and loyalty. All Jesuits and seminary priests were banished from the realm on pain of death. A bill for the security of the Queen disqualified any claimant of the succession, who instigated subjects to rebellion or hurt to the Queen's person, from ever succeeding to the Crown. The threat was aimed at Mary Stuart. Weary of her long restraint, of her failure to rouse Philip or Scotland to aid her, of the baffled revolt of the English Catholics and the baffled intrigues of the Jesuits, she bent for a moment to submission. "Let me go," she wrote to Elizabeth; "let me retire from this island to some solitude where I may prepare my soul to die. Grant this and I will sign away every right which either I or mine can
1586. claim." But the cry was useless, and her despair found a new and more terrible hope in the plots against Elizabeth's life. She knew and approved the vow of Anthony Babington and a band of young Catholics, for the most part connected with the Royal household, to kill the Queen; but plot and approval alike passed through Walsingham's hands, and the seizure of Mary's correspondence revealed her guilt. In spite of her protests, a Commission of Peers sate as her judges at Fotheringay Castle; and their verdict of "guilty" annihilated under the provisions of the recent statute her claim to the Crown. The streets of London blazed with bonfires, and peals rang out from steeple to steeple at the news of her condemnation; but, in spite of the prayer of Parliament for her execution, and the pressure of the Council, Elizabeth shrank from her death. The force of public

Digitized by Google

opinion, however, was now carrying all before it, and the unanimous demand of her people wrested at last a sullen consent from the Queen. She flung the warrant signed upon the floor, and the Council took on themselves the responsibility of executing it. Mary died on a scaffold which was erected in the castle-hall at Fotheringay, as dauntlessly as she had lived. "Do not weep," she said to her ladies, "I have given my word for you." "Tell my friends," she charged Melville, "that I die a good Catholic."

1587

The blow was hardly struck before Elizabeth turned with fury on the ministers who had forced her hand. Burghley was for a while disgraced. Davison, who carried the warrant to the Council, was flung into the Tower to atone for an act which shattered the policy of the Queen. The death of Mary Stuart in fact removed the last obstacle out of Philip's way, by putting an end to the divisions of the English Catholics. To him, as to the nearest heir in blood who was of the Catholic Faith, Mary bequeathed her rights to the Crown, and the hopes of her adherents were from that moment bound up in the success of Spain. The presence of an English army in Flanders only convinced Philip that the road to the conquest of the States lay through England itself; and the operations of Parma in the Low Countries were suspended with a view to the greater enterprise. Vessels and supplies for the fleet which had for three years been gathering in the Tagus were collected from every port of the Spanish coast. It was time for Elizabeth to strike, and the news of the coming Armada called Drake again to sea. He had sailed a year before for the Indies at the head of twenty-five vessels; had requited the wrongs inflicted by the Inquisition on English seamen by plundering Vigo on his way; and avenged his disappointment at the escape of the gold fleet by the sack of Santiago, and by ravaging San Domingo and Carthagena. He now set sail again with thirty small barks, burnt the storeships and galleys in the harbour of Cadiz, stormed the ports of the Faro, and was only foiled in his aim of attacking the Armada itself by orders from home. A descent upon Corunna however completed what Drake called his "singeing of the Spanish King's beard." Elizabeth used the daring blow to back her negotiations for peace; but the Spanish pride had been touched to the quick. Amidst the exchange of protocols Parma gathered thirty thousand men for the coming invasion, collected a fleet of flat-bottomed transports at Dunkirk, and waited impatiently for the Armada to protect his crossing. But the attack of Drake, the death of its first admiral, and the winter storms delayed the fleet from sailing till the spring; and it had hardly started when a gale in the Bay of Biscay drove its scattered vessels into Ferrol. It was only on the last day of July that the sails of the Armada were seen from the Lizard, and the English beacons flared out their alarm along the coast. The news found England

**The Armada.**

1588.

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI.
THE ARMADA.
1572-1588.

ready. An army was mustering under Leicester at Tilbury, the militia of the midland counties were gathering to London, while those of the south and east were held in readiness to meet a descent on either shore. Had Parma landed on the earliest day he purposed, he would have found his way to London barred by a force stronger than his own, a force too of men who had already crossed pikes on equal terms with his best infantry in Flanders. "When I shall have landed," he warned his master, "I must fight battle after battle, I shall lose men by wounds and disease, I must leave detachments behind me to keep open my communications; and in a short time the body of my army will become so weak that not only I may be unable to advance in the face of the enemy, and time may be given to the heretics and your Majesty's other enemies to interfere, but there may fall out some notable inconveniences, with the loss of everything, and I be unable to remedy it." Even had the Prince landed, in fact, the only real chance of Spanish success lay in a Catholic rising; and at this crisis patriotism proved stronger than religious fanaticism in the hearts of the English Catholics. Catholic gentry brought their vessels up alongside of Drake and Lord Howard, and Catholic lords led their tenantry to the muster at Tilbury. But to secure a landing at all, the Spaniards had to be masters of the Channel; and in the Channel lay an English fleet resolved to struggle hard for the mastery. As the Armada sailed on in a broad crescent past Plymouth, moving towards its point of junction with Parma at Dunkirk, the vessels which had gathered under Lord Howard of Effingham slipped out of the bay and hung with the wind upon their rear. In numbers the two forces were strangely unequal; the English fleet counted only 80 vessels against the 130 which composed the Armada. In size of ships the disproportion was even greater. Fifty of the English vessels, including the squadron of Lord Howard and the craft of the volunteers, were little bigger than yachts of the present day. Even of the thirty Queen's ships which formed its main body, there were only four which equalled in tonnage the smallest of the Spanish galleons. Sixty-five of these galleons formed the most formidable half of the Spanish fleet; and four galleasses, or gigantic galleys, armed with 50 guns apiece, fifty-six armed merchantmen, and twenty pinnaces, made up the rest. The Armada was provided with 2,500 cannons, and a vast store of provisions; it had on board 8,000 seamen and 20,000 soldiers; and if a court-favourite, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, had been placed at its head, he was supported by the ablest staff of naval officers which Spain possessed. Small, however, as the English ships were, they were in perfect trim; they sailed two feet for the Spaniards' one, they were manned with 9,000 hardy seamen, and their Admiral was backed by a crowd of captains who had won fame in the Spanish seas. With him was Hawkins, who had been the first to

Digitized by Google

break into the charmed circle of the Indies; Frobisher, the hero of the North-West passage; and above all Drake, who held command of the privateers. They had won too the advantage of the wind; and, closing in or drawing off as they would, the lightly-handled English vessels, which fired four shots to the Spaniard's one, hung boldly on the rear of the great fleet as it moved along the Channel. "The feathers of the Spaniard," in the phrase of the English seamen, were "plucked one by one." Galleon after galleon was sunk, boarded, driven on shore; and yet Medina Sidonia failed in bringing his pursuers to a close engagement. Now halting, now moving slowly on, the running fight between the two fleets lasted throughout the week, till the Armada dropped anchor in Calais roads. The time had now come for sharper work if the junction of the Armada with Parma was to be prevented; for, demoralized as the Spaniards had been by the merciless chase, their loss in ships had not been great, while the English supplies of food and ammunition were fast running out. Howard resolved to force an engagement; and, lighting eight fire-ships at midnight, sent them down with the tide upon the Spanish line. The galleons at once cut their cables, and stood out in panic to sea, drifting with the wind in a long line off Gravelines. Drake resolved at all costs to prevent their return. At dawn the English ships closed fairly in, and almost their last cartridge was spent ere the sun went down. Three great galleons had sunk, three had drifted helplessly on to the Flemish coast; but the bulk of the Spanish vessels remained, and even to Drake the fleet seemed "wonderful great and strong." Within the Armada itself however all hope was gone. Huddled together by the wind and the deadly English fire, their sails torn, their masts shot away, the crowded galleons had become mere slaughter-houses. Four thousand men had fallen, and bravely as the seamen fought they were cowed by the terrible butchery. Medina himself was in despair. "We are lost, Señor Oquenda," he cried to his bravest captain; "what are we to do?" "Let others talk of being lost," replied Oquenda, "your Excellency has only to order up fresh cartridge." But Oquenda stood alone, and a council of war resolved on retreat to Spain by the one course open, that of a circuit round the Orkneys. "Never anything pleased me better," wrote Drake, "than seeing the enemy fly with a southerly wind to the northwards. Have a good eye to the Prince of Parma, for, with the grace of God, if we like, I doubt not ere it be long so to handle the matter with the Duke of Sidonia, as he shall wish himself at St. Mary Port among his orange trees." But the work of destruction was reserved for a mightier foe than Drake. Supplies fell short, and the English vessels were forced to give up the chase; but the Spanish ships which remained had no sooner reached the Orkneys than the storms of the northern seas broke on them with a fury before which all concert and union disap-

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE ARMADA. 1572-1588.

peared. Fifty reached Corunna, bearing ten thousand men stricken with pestilence and death; of the rest some were sunk, some dashed to pieces against the Irish cliffs. The wreckers of the Orkneys and the Faroes, the clansmen of the Scottish Isles, the kernes of Donegal and Galway, all had their part in the work of murder and robbery. Eight thousand Spaniards perished between the Giant's Causeway and the Blaskets. On a strand near Sligo an English captain numbered eleven hundred corpses which had been cast up by the sea. The flower of the Spanish nobility, who had been sent on the new crusade under Alonzo da Leyva, after twice suffering shipwreck, put a third time to sea to founder on a reef near Dumblane.

## Section VII.—The Elizabethan Poets.

[*Authorities.*—For a general account of this period, see Mr. Morley's admirable "First Sketch of English Literature," Hallam's "Literary History," M. Taine's "History of English Literature," &c. Mr. Craik has elaborately illustrated the works of Spenser, and full details of the history of our early drama may be found in Mr. Collier's "History of English Dramatic Literature to the time of Shakspere." Malone's enquiry remains the completest investigation into the history of Shakspere's dramas; and the works of Mr. Armytage Brown and Mr. Gerald Massey contain the latest theories as to the Sonnets. For Ben Jonson and his fellows, see their works with the notes of Gifford, &c.]

**The Elizabethan Poetry.**

We have already watched the shy revival of English letters during the earlier half of Elizabeth's reign. The general awakening of national life, the increase of wealth, of refinement and leisure, which marked that period, had been accompanied, as we have seen, by a quickening of English intelligence, which found vent in an upgrowth of grammar schools, in the new impulse given to classical learning at the Universities, in a passion for translations, which familiarized all England with the masterpieces of Italy and Greece, and above all in the crude but vigorous efforts of Sackville and Lyly after a nobler poetry and prose. But to these local and peculiar influences was to be added a more general influence, that of the restlessness and curiosity which characterized the age. The sphere of human interest was widened as it has never been widened before or since by the revelation of a new heaven and a new earth. It was only in the later years of the sixteenth century that the discoveries of Copernicus were brought home to the general intelligence of the world by Kepler and Galileo, or that the daring of the Buccaneers broke through the veil which the greed of Spain had drawn across the New World of Columbus. Hardly inferior to these revelations as a source of poetic impulse was the sudden and picturesque way in which the various races of the world were brought face to face with one another through the universal passion for foreign travel. While the red tribes of the

Digitized by Google

West were described by Amerigo Vespucci, and the strange civilization of Mexico and Peru disclosed by Cortez and Pizarro, the voyages of the Portuguese threw open the older splendours of the East, and the story of India and China was told for the first time to Christendom by Maffei and Mendoza. England took her full part in this work of discovery. Jenkinson, an English traveller, made his way to Bokhara. Willoughby brought back Muscovy to the knowledge of Western Europe. English mariners penetrated among the Esquimaux, or settled in Virginia. Drake circumnavigated the globe. The "Collection of Voyages," which was published by Hakluyt, not only disclosed the vastness of the world itself, but the infinite number of 1582. the races of mankind, the variety of their laws, their customs, their religions, their very instincts. We see the influence of this new and wider knowledge of the world, not only in the life and richness which it gave to the imagination of the time, but in the immense interest which from this moment attached itself to Man. Shakspere's conception of Caliban, as well as the questionings of Montaigne, mark the beginning of a new and a truer, because a more inductive, philosophy of human nature and human history. The fascination exercised by the study of human character showed itself in the essays of Bacon, and yet more in the wonderful popularity of the drama. And to these larger and world-wide sources of poetic powers was added in England, at the moment which we have reached in its story, the impulse which sprang from national triumph. The victory over the Armada, the deliverance from Spain, the rolling away of the Catholic terror which had hung like a cloud over the hopes of the new people, was like a passing from death into life. The whole aspect of England suddenly changed. As yet the interest of Elizabeth's reign had been political and material; the stage had been crowded with statesmen and warriors, with Cecils and Walsinghams and Drakes. Literature had hardly found a place in the glories of the time. But from the moment when the Armada drifted back broken to Ferrol the figures of warriors and statesmen were dwarfed by the grander figures of poets and philosophers. Amidst the throng in Elizabeth's antechamber the noblest form is that of the singer who lays the "Faerie Queen" at her feet, or of the young lawyer who muses amid the splendours of the presence over the problems of the "Novum Organon." The triumph at Cadiz, the conquest of Ireland, pass unheeded as we watch Hooker building up his "Ecclesiastical Polity" among the sheepfolds, or the genius of Shakspere rising year by year into supremer grandeur in a rude theatre beside the Thames.

**Spenser.** 1552. The full glory of the new literature broke on England with Edmund Spenser. We know little of his life; he was born in East London of poor parents, but connected with the Spencers of Althorpe, even then—as he proudly says—"a house of ancient fame." He studied

Digitized by Google

SEC. VII. THE ELIZABETHAN POETS.

as a sizar at Cambridge, and quitted the University while still a boy to live as a tutor in the north; but after some years of obscure poverty the scorn of a fair "Rosalind" drove him again southwards. A college friendship with Gabriel Harvey served to introduce him to
1579. Lord Leicester, who sent him as his envoy into France, and in whose service he first became acquainted with Leicester's nephew, Sir Philip Sidney. From Sidney's house at Penshurst came his earliest work, the "Shepherd's Calendar;" in form, like Sidney's own "Arcadia," a pastoral, where love and loyalty and Puritanism jostled oddly with the fancied shepherd life. The peculiar melody and profuse imagination which the pastoral disclosed at once placed its author in the forefront of living poets, but a far greater work was already in hand; and from some words of Gabriel Harvey's we see Spenser bent on rivalling Ariosto, and even hoping "to overgo" the "Orlando Furioso," in his
1580. "Elvish Queen." The ill-will or indifference of Burleigh, however, blasted the expectations he had drawn from the patronage of Sidney or the Earl of Leicester, and the favour with which he had been welcomed by the Queen. Sidney, himself in disgrace with Elizabeth, withdrew to Wilton to write the "Arcadia," by his sister's side; and "discontent of my long fruitless stay in princes' courts," the poet tells us, "and expectation vain of idle hopes," drove Spenser at last into exile. He followed Lord Grey as his secretary into Ireland, and remained there on the Deputy's recall in the enjoyment of an office and a grant of land from the forfeited estates of the Earl of Desmond. Spenser had thus enrolled himself among the colonists to whom England was looking at the time for the regeneration of Southern Ireland, and the practical interest he took in the "barren soil where cold and want and poverty do grow" was shown by the later publication of a prose tractate on the condition and government of the island. It was at Dublin or in his castle of Kilcolman, two miles from Doneraile, "under the fall of Mole, that mountain hoar," that he spent the memorable years in which Mary fell on the scaffold and the Armada came and went; and it was in the latter home that Walter Raleigh found him sitting "alwaies idle," as it seemed to his restless friend, "among the cooly shades of the green alders by the Mulla's shore," in a visit made memorable by the poem of "Colin Clout's come Home again." But in the "idlesse" and solitude of the poet's exile the great work begun in the
1590. two pleasant years of his stay at Penshurst had at last taken form, and it was to publish the first three books of the "Faerie Queen" that Spenser returned in Raleigh's company to London.

**The Faerie Queen.**

The appearance of the "Faerie Queen" is the one critical event in the annals of English poetry; it settled, in fact, the question whether there was to be such a thing as English poetry or no. The older national verse which had blossomed and died in Caedmon sprang suddenly into a grander life in Chaucer, but it closed again in a yet more

Digitized by Google

complete death. Across the Border, indeed, the Scotch poets of the fifteenth century preserved something of their master's vivacity and colour, and in England itself the Italian poetry of the Renascence had of late found echoes in Surrey and Sidney. The new English drama too, as we shall presently see, was beginning to display its wonderful powers, and the work of Marlowe had already prepared the way for the work of Shakspere. But bright as was the promise of coming song, no great imaginative poem had broken the silence of English literature for nearly two hundred years when Spenser landed at Bristol with the "Faerie Queen." From that moment the stream of English poetry has flowed on without a break. There have been times, as in the years which immediately followed, when England has "become a nest of singing birds;" there have been times when song was scant and poor; but there never has been a time when England was wholly without a singer. The new English verse has been true to the source from which it sprang, and Spenser has always been "the poet's poet." But in his own day he was the poet of England at large. The "Faerie Queen" was received with a burst of general welcome. It became "the delight of every accomplished gentleman, the model of every poet, the solace of every soldier." The poem expressed, indeed, the very life of the time. It was with a true poetic instinct that Spenser fell back for the framework of his story on the faery world of Celtic romance, whose wonder and mystery had in fact become the truest picture of the wonder and mystery of the world around him. In the age of Cortez and of Raleigh dreamland had ceased to be dreamland, and no marvel or adventure that befell lady or knight was stranger than the tales which weather-beaten mariners from the Southern Seas were telling every day to grave merchants upon 'Change. The very incongruities of the story of Arthur and his knighthood, strangely as it had been built up out of the rival efforts of bard and jongleur and priest, made it the fittest vehicle for the expression of the world of incongruous feeling which we call the Renascence. To modern eyes perhaps there is something grotesque in the strange medley of figures which crowd the canvas of the "Faerie Queen," in its fauns dancing on the sward where knights have hurtled together, in its alternation of the salvage-men from the New World with the satyrs of classic mythology, in the giants, dwarfs, and monsters of popular fancy, who jostle with the nymphs of Greek legend and the damosels of mediæval romance. But, strange as the medley is, it reflects truly enough the stranger medley of warring ideals and irreconcileable impulses which made up the life of Spenser's contemporaries. It was not in the "Faerie Queen" only, but in the world which it pourtrayed, that the religious mysticism of the Middle Ages stood face to face with the intellectual freedom of the Revival of Letters, that asceticism and self-denial cast their spell on imaginations glowing with the sense of varied and inexhaustible

Digitized by Google

SEC. VII.

THE ELIZABETHAN POETS.

existence, that the dreamy and poetic refinement of feeling which expressed itself in the fanciful unrealities of chivalry co-existed with the rough practical energy that sprang from an awakening sense of human power, or the lawless extravagance of an idealized friendship and love, with the moral sternness and elevation which England was drawing from the Reformation and the Bible. But strangely contrasted as are the elements of the poem, they are harmonized by the calmness and serenity which is the note of the "Faerie Queen." The world of the Renascence is around us, but it is ordered, refined, and calmed by the poet's touch. The warmest scenes which he borrows from the Italian verse of his day are idealized into purity; the very struggle of the men around him is lifted out of its pettier accidents, and raised into a spiritual oneness with the struggle in the soul itself. There are allusions in plenty to contemporary events, but the contest between Elizabeth and Mary takes ideal form in that of Una and the false Duessa, and the clash of arms between Spain and the Huguenots comes to us faint and hushed through the serener air. The verse, like the story, rolls on as by its own natural power, without haste or effort or delay. The gorgeous colouring, the profuse and often complex imagery which Spenser's imagination lavishes, leave no sense of confusion in the reader's mind. Every figure, strange as it may be, is seen clearly and distinctly as it passes by. It is in this calmness, this serenity, this spiritual elevation of the "Faerie Queen," that we feel the new life of the coming age moulding into ordered and harmonious form the life of the Renascence. Both in its conception, and in the way in which this conception is realized in the portion of his work which Spenser completed, his poem strikes the note of the coming Puritanism. In his earlier pastoral, the "Shepherd's Calendar," the poet had boldly taken his part with the more advanced reformers against the Church policy of the Court. He had chosen Archbishop Grindal, who was then in disgrace for his Puritan sympathies, as his model of a Christian pastor; and attacked with sharp invective the pomp of the higher clergy. His "Faerie Queen," in its religious theory, is Puritan to the core. The worst foe of its "Red-cross Knight" is the false and scarlet-clad Duessa of Rome, who parts him for a while from Truth and leads him to the house of Ignorance. Spenser presses strongly and pitilessly for the execution of Mary Stuart. No bitter word ever breaks the calm of his verse save when it touches on the perils with which Catholicism was environing England, perils before which his knight must fall "were not that Heavenly Grace doth him uphold and steadfast Truth acquite him out of all." But it is yet more in the temper and aim of his work that we catch the nobler and deeper tones of English Puritanism. In his earlier musings at Penshurst the poet had purposed to surpass Ariosto, but the gaiety of Ariosto's song is utterly absent from his own. Not a ripple of laughter

Digitized by Google

breaks the calm surface of Spenser's verse. He is habitually serious, and the seriousness of his poetic tone reflects the seriousness of his poetic purpose. His aim, he tells us, was to represent the moral virtues, to assign to each its knightly patron, so that its excellence might be expressed and its contrary vice trodden under foot by deeds of arms and chivalry. In knight after knight of the twelve he purposed to paint, he wished to embody some single virtue of the virtuous man in its struggle with the faults and errors which specially beset it; till in Arthur, the sum of the whole company, man might have been seen perfected, in his longing and progress towards the "Faerie Queen," the Divine Glory which is the true end of human effort. The largeness of his culture indeed, his exquisite sense of beauty, and above all the very intensity of his moral enthusiasm, saved Spenser from the narrowness and exaggeration which often distorted goodness into unloveliness in the Puritan. Christian as he is to the core, his Christianity is enriched and fertilized by the larger temper of the Renascence, as well as by a poet's love of the natural world in which the older mythologies struck their roots. Diana and the gods of heathendom take a sacred tinge from the purer sanctities of the new faith; and in one of the greatest songs of the "Faerie Queen," the conception of love widens, as it widened in the mind of a Greek, into the mighty thought of the productive energy of Nature. Spenser borrows in fact the delicate and refined forms of the Platonist philosophy to express his own moral enthusiasm. Not only does he love, as others have loved, all that is noble and pure and of good report, but he is fired as none before or after him have been fired with a passionate sense of moral beauty. Justice, Temperance, Truth, are no mere names to him, but real existences to which his whole nature clings with a rapturous affection. Outer beauty he believed to spring, and loved because it sprang, from the beauty of the soul within. There was much in such a moral protest as this to rouse dislike in any age, but it is the glory of the age of Elizabeth that, "mad world" as in many ways it was, all that was noble welcomed the "Faerie Queen." Elizabeth herself, says Spenser, "to mine open pipe inclined her ear," and bestowed a pension on the poet. He soon returned to Ireland, to commemorate his marriage in Sonnets and the most beautiful of bridal songs, and to complete three more books of his poem amongst love and poverty and troubles from his Irish neighbours. Trouble was, indeed, soon to take a graver form. Spenser was still at work on the "Faerie Queen" when the Irish discontent broke into revolt, and the poet escaped from his burning house to fly to England, and to die broken-hearted, it may be—as Jonson says—"for want of bread," in an inn at Westminster.

1583.

1596.

1599.

If the "Faerie Queen" expressed the higher elements of the Elizabethan age, the whole of that age, its lower elements and its higher

**The Elizabethan Drama.**



Digitized by Google

SEC. VII.

THE ELIZABETHAN POETS.

alike, was expressed in the English drama. We have already pointed out the circumstances which everywhere throughout Europe were giving a poetic impulse to the newly-aroused intelligence of men, and it is remarkable that this impulse everywhere took a dramatic shape. The artificial French tragedy which began about this time with Garnier, was not, indeed, destined to exert any influence over English poetry till a later age; but the influence of the Italian comedy, which had begun half a century earlier with Machiavelli and Ariosto, was felt directly through the Novelle, or stories, which served as plots for the dramatists. It left its stamp indeed, on some of the worst characteristics of the English stage. The features of our drama that startled the moral temper of the time and won the deadly hatred of the Puritan, its grossness and profanity, its tendency to scenes of horror and crime, its profuse employment of cruelty and lust as grounds of dramatic action, its daring use of the horrible and the unnatural whenever they enable it to display the more terrible and revolting sides of human passion, were derived from the Italian stage. It is doubtful how much the English playwrights may have owed to the Spanish drama, that under Lope and Cervantes sprang suddenly into a grandeur which almost rivalled their own. In the intermixture of tragedy and comedy, in the abandonment of the solemn uniformity of poetic diction for the colloquial language of real life, the use of unexpected incidents, the complications of their plots and intrigues, the dramas of England and Spain are remarkably alike; but the likeness seems rather to have sprung from a similarity in the circumstances to which both owed their rise, than to any direct connexion of the one with the other. The real origin of the English drama, in fact, lay not in any influence from without, but in the influence of England itself. The temper of the nation was dramatic. Ever since the Reformation, the Palace, the Inns of Court, and the University had been vyeing with one another in the production of plays; and so early was their popularity, that even under Henry the Eighth it was found necessary to create a "Master of the Revels" to supervise them. Every progress of Elizabeth from shire to shire was a succession of shows and interludes. Dian with her nymphs met the Queen as she returned from hunting; Love presented her with his golden arrow as she passed through the gates of Norwich. From the earlier years of her reign, the new spirit of the Renascence had been pouring itself into the rough mould of the Mystery Plays, whose allegorical virtues and vices, or scriptural heroes and heroines, had handed on the spirit of the drama through the Middle Ages. Adaptations from classical pieces soon began to alternate with the purely religious "Moralities;" and an attempt at a livelier style of expression and invention appeared in the popular comedy of "Gammer Gurton's Needle;" while Sackville, Lord Dorset, in his tragedy of

Digitized by Google

"Gorboduc" made a bold effort at sublimity of diction, and introduced the use of blank verse as the vehicle of dramatic dialogue. But it was not to these tentative efforts of scholars and nobles that the English stage was really indebted for the amazing outburst of genius, which dates from the moment when "the Earl of Leicester's servants" erected the first public theatre in Blackfriars. It was the people itself that created its Stage. The theatre, indeed, was commonly only the courtyard of an inn, or a mere booth such as is still seen at a country fair; the bulk of the audience sate beneath the open sky in the "pit" or yard, a few covered seats in the galleries which ran round it formed the boxes of the wealthier spectators, while patrons and nobles found seats upon the actual boards. All the appliances were of the roughest sort: a few flowers served to indicate a garden, crowds and armies were represented by a dozen scene-shifters with swords and bucklers, heroes rode in and out on hobby-horses, and a scroll on a post told whether the scene was at Athens or London. There were no female actors, and the grossness which startles us in words which fell from women's lips took a different colour when every woman's part was acted by a boy. But difficulties such as these were more than compensated by the popular character of the drama itself. Rude as the theatre might be, all the world was there. The stage was crowded with nobles and courtiers. Apprentices and citizens thronged the benches in the yard below. The rough mob of the pit inspired, as it felt, the vigorous life, the rapid transitions, the passionate energy, the reality, the lifelike medley and confusion, the racy dialogue, the chat, the wit, the pathos, the sublimity, the rant and buffoonery, the coarse horrors and vulgar bloodshedding, the immense range over all classes of society, the intimacy with the foulest as well as the fairest developments of human temper, which characterized the English stage. The new drama represented "the very age and body of the time, his form and feature." The people itself brought its nobleness and its vileness to the boards. No stage was ever so human, no poetic life so intense. Wild, reckless, defiant of all past tradition, of all conventional laws, the English dramatists owned no teacher, no source of poetic inspiration, but the people itself.

**The Earlier Dramatists.**

Few events in our literary history are so startling as this sudden rise of the Elizabethan drama. The first public theatre, as we have seen, was erected only in the middle of the Queen's reign. Before the close of it eighteen theatres existed in London alone. Fifty dramatic poets, many of the first order, appeared in the fifty years which precede the closing of the theatres by the Puritans; and great as is the number of their works which have perished, we still possess a hundred dramas, all written within this period, and of which at least a half are excellent. A glance at their authors shows us that the intellectual quickening of the age had now reached the mass of the people.



Digitized by Google

SEC. VII.
THE ELIZABETHAN POETS.
1587.

Almost all of the new playwrights were fairly educated, and many were University men. But, instead of courtly singers of the Sidney and Spenser sort, we see the advent of the "poor scholar." The earlier dramatists, such as Nash, Peele, Kyd, Greene, or Marlowe, were for the most part poor, and reckless in their poverty; wild livers, defiant of law or common fame, in revolt against the usages and religion of their day, "atheists" in general repute, "holding Moses for a juggler," haunting the brothel and the alehouse, and dying starved or in tavern brawls. But with their appearance began the Elizabethan drama. The few plays which have reached us of an earlier date are either cold imitations of the classical and Italian comedy, or rude farces like "Ralph Roister Doister," or tragedies such as "Gorboduc," where, poetic as occasional passages may be, there is little promise of dramatic development. But in the year which preceded the coming of the Armada the whole aspect of the stage suddenly changes, and the new dramatists range themselves around two men of very different genius, Robert Greene and Christopher Marlowe. Of Greene, as the creator of our lighter English prose, we have already spoken. But his work as a poet was of yet greater importance. No figure better paints the group of young playwrights. He left Cambridge to travel through Italy and Spain, and to bring back the debauchery of the one and the scepticism of the other. In the words of remorse he wrote before his death he paints himself as a drunkard and a roysterer, winning money only by ceaseless pamphlets and plays to waste it on wine and women, and drinking the cup of life to the dregs. Hell and the after-world were the butts of his ceaseless mockery. If he had not feared the judges of the Queen's Courts more than he feared God, he said, in bitter jest, he should often have turned cutpurse. He married, and loved his wife, but she was soon deserted; and the wretched profligate found himself again plunged into excesses which he loathed, though he could not live without them. But wild as was the life of Greene, his pen was pure. He is steadily on virtue's side in the love pamphlets and novelettes he poured out in endless succession, and whose plots were dramatized by the school which gathered round him. His keen perception of character and the relations of social life, the playfulness of his fancy, and the liveliness of his style exerted an influence on his contemporaries hardly inferior to that of Marlowe. The life of Marlowe was as riotous, his scepticism even more daring, than the life and scepticism of Greene. His early death alone saved him, in all probability, from a prosecution for atheism. He was charged with calling Moses a juggler, and with boasting that, if he undertook to write a new religion, it should be a better religion than the Christianity he saw around him. But in a far higher degree than Greene he is the creator of the English drama.

1564 Born at the opening of Elizabeth's reign, the son of a Canterbury

Digitized by Google

shoemaker, but educated at Cambridge, Marlowe burst on the world, in the year which preceded the triumph over the Armada, with a play which at once wrought a revolution in the English stage. Bombastic and extravagant as it was, and extravagance reached its height in the scene where captive kings, the "pampered jades of Asia," drew their conqueror's car across the stage, "Tamburlaine" not only indicated the revolt of the new drama against the timid inanities of Euphuism, but gave an earnest of that imaginative daring, the secret of which Marlowe was to bequeath to the playwrights who followed him. He perished at thirty in a shameful brawl, but in his brief career he had struck the grander notes of the coming drama. His Jew of Malta was the herald of Shylock. He opened in "Edward the Second" the series of historical plays which gave us "Cæsar" and "Richard the Third." Riotous, grotesque, and full of a mad thirst for pleasure as it is, his "Faustus" was the first dramatic attempt to touch the great problem of the relations of man to the unseen world, to paint the power of doubt in a temper leavened with superstition, the daring of human defiance in a heart abandoned to despair. Rash, unequal, stooping even to the ridiculous in his cumbrous and vulgar buffoonery, there is a force in Marlowe, a conscious grandeur of tone, a range of passion, which sets him above all his contemporaries save one. In the higher qualities of imagination, as in the majesty and sweetness of his "mighty line," he is inferior to Shakspere alone.

1593.

A few daring jests, a brawl and a fatal stab, make up the life of Marlowe; but even details such as these are wanting to the life of William Shakspere. Of hardly any great poet, indeed, do we know so little. For the story of his youth we have only one or two trifling legends, and these almost certainly false. Not a single letter or characteristic saying, not one of the jests "spoken at the Mermaid," hardly a single anecdote, remain to illustrate his busy life in London. His look and figure in later age have been preserved by the bust over his tomb at Stratford, and a hundred years after his death he was still remembered in his native town; but the minute diligence of the enquirers of the Georgian time was able to glean hardly a single detail, even of the most trivial order, which could throw light upon the years of retirement before his death. It is owing perhaps to the harmony and unity of his temper that no salient peculiarity seems to have left its trace on the memory of his contemporaries; it is the very grandeur of his genius which precludes us from discovering any personal trait in his works. His supposed self-revelation in the Sonnets is so obscure that only a few outlines can be traced even by the boldest conjecture. In his dramas he is all his characters, and his characters range over all mankind. There is not one, or the act or word of one, that we can identify personally with the poet himself.

Shakspere.

Digitized by Google

SEC. VII.
THE ELIZABETHAN POETS.

He was born in the sixth year of Elizabeth's reign, twelve years after the birth of Spenser, three years later than the birth of Bacon. Marlowe was of the same age with Shakspere: Greene probably a few years older. His father, a glover and small farmer of Stratford-on-Avon, was forced by poverty to lay down his office of alderman, as his son reached boyhood; and the stress of poverty may have been the cause which drove William Shakspere, who was already married at eighteen to a wife older than himself, to London and the stage. His life in the capital is said (but the statement is mere guesswork) to have begun in his twenty-third year, the memorable year which followed Sidney's death, which preceded the coming of the Armada, and which witnessed the production of Marlowe's "Tamburlaine." If we take the language of the Sonnets as a record of his personal feeling, his new profession as an actor stirred in him only the bitterness of self-contempt. He chides with Fortune, "that did not better for my life provide than public means that public manners breed;" he writhes at the thought that he has "made himself a motley to the view" of the gaping apprentices in the pit of Blackfriars. "Thence comes it," he adds, "that my name receives a brand, and almost thence my nature is subdued to that it works in." But the application of the words is a more than doubtful one. In spite of petty squabbles with some of his dramatic rivals at the outset of his career, the genial nature of the newcomer seems to have won him a general love among his fellow-actors. In his early years, while still a mere fitter of old plays for the stage, a fellow-playwright, Chettle, answered Greene's attack on him in words of honest affection: "Myself have seen his demeanor no less civil, than he excellent in the quality he professes: besides, divers of worship have reported his uprightness of dealing, which augurs his honesty; and his facetious grace in writing, that approves his art." His partner Burbage spoke of him after death as a "worthy friend and fellow;" and Jonson handed down the general tradition of his time when he described him as "indeed honest, and of an open and free nature."

1564.

1587?

His profession as an actor was at any rate of essential service to him in the poetic career which he soon undertook. Not only did it give him the sense of theatrical necessities which makes his plays so effective on the boards, but it enabled him to bring his pieces as he wrote them to the test of the stage. If there is any truth in Jonson's statement that Shakspere never blotted a line, there is no justice in the censure which it implies on his carelessness or incorrectness. The conditions of poetic publication were in fact wholly different from those of our own day. A drama remained for years in manuscript as an acting piece, subject to continual revision and amendment; and every rehearsal and representation afforded hints for change, which we know the young poet was far from neglecting. The chance which has

Digitized by Google

preserved an earlier edition of his "Hamlet" shows in what an unsparing way Shakspere could recast even the finest products of his genius. Five years after the supposed date of his arrival in London, he was already famous as a dramatist. Greene speaks bitterly of him, under the name of "Shakescene," as an "upstart crow beautified with our feathers," a sneer which points to a time when the young author was preparing himself for loftier flights by fitting older pieces of his predecessors for the stage. He was soon partner in the theatre, actor, and playwright; and another nickname, that of "Johannes Factotum," or Jack-of-all-Trades, shows his readiness to take all honest work which came to hand. "Pericles" and "Titus Andronicus" are probably instances of almost worthless but popular plays touched up with a few additions from Shakspere's pen; and of the Second and Third Parts of "Henry the Sixth" only about a third can be traced to him. The death scene of Cardinal Beaufort, though chosen by Reynolds in his famous picture as specially Shaksperian, is taken bodily from some older dramatist, Marlowe perhaps or Peele, whom Shakspere was adapting for the stage.

With the poem of "Venus and Adonis," "the first heir of my invention," as he calls it, the period of independent creation fairly began. The date of its publication was a very memorable one. The "Faerie Queen" had appeared only three years before, and had placed Spenser, without a rival, at the head of English poetry. On the other hand, the two leading dramatists of the time passed at this moment suddenly away. Greene died in poverty and self-reproach in the house of a poor shoemaker. "Doll," he wrote to the wife he had abandoned, "I charge thee, by the love of our youth and by my soul's rest, that thou wilt see this man paid; for if he and his wife had not succoured me, I had died in the streets." "Oh, that a year were granted me to live," cried the young poet from his bed of death—"but I must die, of every man abhorred! Time, loosely spent, will not again be won! My time is loosely spent—and I undone!" A year later, the death of Marlowe in a street brawl removed the only rival whose powers might have equalled Shakspere's own. He was now about thirty; and the twenty-three years which elapsed between the appearance of the "Adonis" and his death were filled with a series of masterpieces. Nothing is more characteristic of his genius than its incessant activity. Throughout the whole of this period he produced on an average two dramas a year, and this in addition to the changes and transformations he effected in those already brought on the stage. When we attempt, however, to trace the growth and progress of the poet's mind in the order of his plays we are met, at least in the case of many of them, by an absence of any real information as to the dates of their appearance, which is hardly compensated by the guesses of later enquirers. The facts on which conjecture has to build are indeed

1593–1598.

Digitized by Google

SEC. VII.

THE ELIZABETHAN POETS.

extremely few. "Venus and Adonis," with the "Lucrece," must have been written before their publication in 1593-4; the Sonnets, though not published till 1609, were known in some form among his private friends as early as 1598. His earlier plays are defined by a list given in the "Wit's Treasury" of Francis Meres in 1598, though the omission of a play from a casual catalogue of this kind would hardly warrant us in assuming its necessary non-existence at the time. The works ascribed to him at his death are fixed, in the same approximate fashion, through the edition published by his fellow-actors. Beyond these meagre facts, and our knowledge of the publication of a few of his dramas in his lifetime, all is uncertain; and the conclusions which have been drawn from these, and from the dramas themselves, as well as from assumed resemblances with, or references to, other plays of the period can only be accepted as rough approximations to the truth. His lighter comedies and historical dramas can be assigned with fair probability to the period between 1593, when he was known as nothing more than an adapter, and 1598, when they are mentioned in the list of Meres. They bear on them indeed the stamp of youth. In "Love's Labour's Lost," the young playwright quizzes the verbal wit and high-flown extravagance of thought and phrase which Euphues had made fashionable in the court world of the time; his fun breaks almost riotously out in the practical jokes of the "Taming of the Shrew" and the endless blunderings of the "Comedy of Errors." His work is as yet marked by little poetic elevation, or by passion; but the easy grace of the dialogue, the dexterous management of a complicated story, the genial gaiety of his tone, and the music of his verse, placed Shakspere at once at the head of his fellows as a master of social comedy. In the "Two Gentlemen of Verona," which followed, perhaps, these earlier efforts, his painting of manners is suffused by a tenderness and ideal beauty, which formed an effective protest against the hard though vigorous character-painting which the first success of Ben Jonson in "Every Man in his Humour" brought at the time into fashion. Quick on these lighter comedies followed two, in which his genius started fully into life. His poetic power, held in reserve till now, showed itself with a splendid profusion in the brilliant fancies of the "Midsummer Night's Dream;" and passion swept like a tide of resistless delight through "Romeo and Juliet." Side by side however with these delicate imaginings and piquant sketches of manners, had been appearing during this short interval of intense activity his historical dramas. No plays seem to have been more popular, from the earliest hours of the new stage, than dramatic representations of our history. Marlowe had shown in his "Edward the Second" what tragic grandeur could be reached in this favourite field; and, as we have seen, Shakspere had been led naturally towards it by his earlier occupation as an adapter of stock pieces like "Henry the Sixth" for the new requirements of

Digitized by Google

the stage. He still to some extent followed in plan the older plays on the subjects he selected, but in his treatment of their themes he shook boldly off the yoke of the past. A larger and deeper conception of human character than any of the old dramatists had reached displayed itself in Richard the Third, in Falstaff, or in Hotspur; while in Constance and Richard the Second the pathos of human suffering was painted as even Marlowe had never dared to paint it. No dramas have done more for his enduring popularity with the mass of Englishmen than these historical plays of Shakspere; echoing sometimes, as they do, much of our national prejudice and unfairness of temper—(as in his miserable caricature of Joan of Arc)—but instinct throughout with English humour, with an English love of hard fighting, an English faith in the doom that waits upon triumphant evil, an English pity for the fallen.

1598–1608. Whether as a tragedian or as a writer of social comedy, Shakspere had now passed far beyond his fellows. "The Muses," said Meres, "would speak with Shakspere's fine filed phrase, if they would speak English." His personal popularity was at its height. His pleasant temper, and the vivacity of his wit, had drawn him early into contact with the young Earl of Southampton, to whom his "Adonis" and "Lucrece" are dedicated; and the different tone of the two dedications shows how rapidly acquaintance ripened into an ardent friendship. It is probably to Southampton that the earlier Sonnets were addressed during this period, while others may have been written in the character of his friend during the quickly changing phases of the Earl's adventurous life. His wealth, too, was growing fast. A year after the appearance of his two poems the dramatic company at Blackfriars, in which he was a partner as well as actor, built their new theatre of the Globe on the Bankside; and four years later he was rich enough to aid his father, and buy the house at Stratford which afterwards became his home. The tradition that Elizabeth was so pleased with Falstaff in "Henry the Fourth" that she ordered the poet to show her Falstaff in love—an order which produced the "Merry Wives of Windsor"—whether true or false, shows his repute as a playwright. As the group of earlier poets passed away, they found successors in Marston, Dekker, Middleton, Heywood, and Chapman, and above all in Ben Jonson. But none of these could dispute the supremacy of Shakspere. The verdict of Meres in 1598, that "Shakspere among the English is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage," represented the general feeling of his contemporaries. He was fully master at last of the resources of his art. The "Merchant of Venice" marks the perfection of his development as a dramatist in the completeness of its stage effect, the ingenuity of its incidents, the ease of its movement, the poetic beauty of its higher passages, the reserve and self-control with which its poetry is used, the conception and development of character, and above

Digitized by Google

SEC. VII.

THE ELIZABETHAN POETS.

all the mastery with which character and event is grouped round the figure of Shylock. But the poet's temper is still young; the "Merry Wives of Windsor" is a burst of gay laughter; and laughter more tempered, yet full of a sweeter fascination, rings round us in "As You Like It." But in the melancholy and meditative Jaques of the last drama we feel the touch of a new and graver mood. Youth, so full and buoyant in the poet till now, seems to have passed almost suddenly away. Shakspere had nearly reached forty; and in one of his Sonnets, which cannot have been written at a much later time than this, there are indications that he already felt the advance of premature age. The outer world suddenly darkened around him; the brilliant circle of young nobles whose friendship he had shared was broken up by the political storm which burst in the mad struggle of the Earl of Essex for power. Essex himself fell on the scaffold; his friend and Shakspere's idol, Southampton, passed a prisoner into the Tower; Herbert, Lord Pembroke, the poet's younger patron, was banished from Court.

1601. Hard as it is to read the riddle of the Essex rising, we know that to some of the younger and more chivalrous minds of the age it seemed a noble effort to rescue England from intriguers who were gathering round the Queen; and in this effort Shakspere seems to have taken part. The production of his play of "Richard the Second" at the theatre was one of the means adopted by the conspirators to prepare the nation for the revolution they contemplated; and the suspension of the players, on the suppression of the revolt, marks the Government's opinion as to the way their sympathies had gone. While friends were thus falling and hopes fading without, the poet's own mind seems to have been going through a phase of bitter suffering and unrest. In spite of the ingenuity of commentators, it is difficult and even impossible to derive any knowledge of Shakspere's inner history from the Sonnets; "the strange imagery of passion which passes over the magic mirror," it has been finely said, "has no tangible evidence before or behind it;" but its mere passing is itself an evidence of the restlessness and agony within. The change in the character of his dramas gives a surer indication of his change of mood. "There seems to have been a period in Shakspere's life," says Mr. Hallam, "when his heart was ill at ease, and ill content with the world and his own conscience; the memory of hours misspent, the pang of affection misplaced or unrequited, the experience of man's worser nature which intercourse with unworthy associates by choice or circumstances peculiarly teaches, these as they sank down into the depth of his great mind seem not only to have inspired into it the conception of Lear or Timon, but that of one primary character—the censurer of mankind. This type is first seen in the philosophic melancholy of Jacques, gazing with an

1602. undiminished serenity and with a gaiety of fancy, though not of manners, on the follies of the world. It assumes a graver cast in the

Digitized by Google

exiled Duke of the same play, and next one rather more severe in the Duke in 'Measure for Measure.' In all these, however, it is merely contemplative philosophy. In Hamlet this is mingled with the impulses of a perturbed heart under the pressure of extraordinary circumstances; it shines no longer, as in the former characters, with a steady light, but plays in fitful coruscations amidst feigned gaiety and extravagance. In Lear it is the flash of sudden inspiration across the incongruous imagery of madness; in Timon it is obscured by the exaggeration of misanthropy."

1608–1616.

The "obstinate questionings of invisible things" which had given their philosophical cast to the wonderful group of dramas which had at last raised Shakspere to his post among the greatest of the world's poets, still hung round him in the years of quiet retirement which preceded his death. The wealth he had amassed as actor, stage-proprietor, and author enabled him to purchase a handsome property at Stratford, the home of his youth, which, if we may trust tradition, he had never failed to visit once a year since he left it to seek his fortune on the London boards. His last dramas, "Othello," the "Tempest," "Cæsar," "Antony," "Coriolanus," were written in the midst of ease and competence, in the home where he lived as a country gentleman with his wife and daughters. His classical plays were the last assertion of an age which was passing away. The spirit of the Renascence was fading before the spirit of the Reformation. Puritanism was hardening and narrowing, while it was invigorating and ennobling, life by its stern morality, its seriousness, its conviction of the omnipotence of God and of the weakness of man. The old daring which had turned England into a people of "adventurers," the sense of inexhaustible resources in the very nature of man, the buoyant freshness of youth, the intoxicating sense of beauty and joy, which had created Drake and Sidney and Marlowe, were dying with Shakspere himself. The Bible was superseding Plutarch. The pedantry of Euphuism was giving way to the pedantry of Scriptural phrases. The "obstinate questionings of invisible things," which haunted the finer minds of the Renascence, were being stereotyped into the theological formulas of the Predestinarian. A new political world, healthier, more really national, but less picturesque, less wrapt in the mystery and splendour which poets love, was rising with the new moral world. Rifts which were still little were widening hour by hour, and threatening ruin to the great fabric of Church and State, which Elizabeth had built up, and to which the men of the Renascence clung passionately. From all this new world of feeling and action Shakspere stood utterly aloof. Of the popular tendencies of Puritanism—and great as were its faults, Puritanism may fairly claim to be the first political system which recognized the grandeur of the people as a whole—Shakspere knew nothing. In his earlier dramas he had reflected the common faith of his age

Digitized by Google

SEC. VII. THE ELIZABETHAN POETS.

in the grandeur of Kingship as the one national centre; in his later plays he represents the aristocratic view of social life which was shared by all the nobler spirits of the Elizabethan time. Coriolanus is the embodiment of a great noble; and the reiterated taunts which he hurls in play after play at the rabble only echo the general temper of the Renascence. Nor were the spiritual sympathies of the poet those of the coming time. While the world was turning more and more to the speculations of theology, man and man's nature remained to the last the one inexhaustible subject of interest with Shakspere, as it had been with his favourite Montaigne. Caliban was his latest creation. It is impossible to discover whether his faith, if faith there were, was Catholic or Protestant. It is difficult, indeed, to say whether he had any religious belief or no. The religious phrases which are thinly scattered over his works are little more than expressions of a distant and imaginative reverence. And on the deeper grounds of religious faith his silence is significant. He is silent, and the doubt of Hamlet deepens his silence, about the after-world. "To die," it may be, was to him as to Claudio, "to go we know not where." Often, at any rate, as his "questionings" turn to the riddle of life and death, he leaves it a riddle to the last, without heeding the common theological solutions around him. "We are such stuff as dreams are made of, and our little life is rounded by a sleep."

**The Later Dramatists.**

The contrast between the spirit of the Elizabethan drama and the new temper of the nation became yet stronger when the death of Shakspere left the sovereignty of the English stage to Ben Jonson. Jonson retained it almost to the moment when the drama itself perished in the storm of the Civil War. Webster and Ford, indeed, surpassed him in tragic grandeur, Massinger in facility and grace, Beaumont and Fletcher in poetry and inventiveness; but in the breadth of his dramatic quality, his range over every kind of poetic excellence, Jonson was excelled by Shakspere alone. His life retained to the last the riotous, defiant colour of the earlier dramatic world, in which he had made his way to fame. The stepson of a bricklayer, then a poor Cambridge scholar, he enlisted as a volunteer in the wars of the Low Countries, killed his man in single combat in sight of both armies, and returned at nineteen to London to throw himself on the stage for bread. At forty-five he was still so vigorous that he made his way to Scotland on foot. Even in old age his "mountain belly," his scarred face, and massive frame became famous among the men of a younger time, as they gathered at the "Mermaid" to listen to his wit, his poetry, his outbursts of spleen and generosity, of delicate fancy, of pedantry, of riotous excess. His entry on the stage was marked by a proud resolve to reform it. Already a fine scholar in early manhood, and disdainful of writers who, like Shakspere,

1593.

Digitized by Google

"knew little Latin and less Greek," Jonson aimed at a return to classic severity, to a severer criticism and taste. He blamed the extravagance which marked the poetry around him, he studied his plots, he gave symmetry and regularity to his sentences and conciseness to his phrase. But creativeness disappears: in his social comedies we are amongst qualities and types rather than men, among abstractions and not characters. His comedy is no genial reflection of life as it is, but a moral, satirical effort to reform manners. It is only his wonderful grace and real poetic feeling that lightens all this pedantry. He shares the vigour and buoyancy of life which distinguished the school from which he sprang. His stage is thronged with figures. In spite of his talk about correctness, his own extravagance is only saved from becoming ridiculous by his amazing force. If he could not create characters, his wealth of striking details gave life to the types which he substituted for them. His poetry, too, is of the highest order; his lyrics of the purest, lightest fancy: his masques rich with gorgeous pictures; his pastoral, the "Sad Shepherd," fragment as it is, breathes a delicate tenderness. But, in spite of the beauty and strength which lingered on, the life of our drama was fast ebbing away. The interest of the people was in reality being drawn to newer and graver themes, as the struggle of the Great Rebellion threw its shadow before it, and the efforts of the playwrights to arrest this tendency of the time by fresh excitement only brought about the ruin of the stage. The grossness of the later comedy is incredible. Almost as incredible is the taste of the later tragedians for horrors of incest and blood. The hatred of the Puritans to the stage was not a mere longing to avenge the taunts and insults which the stage had levelled at Puritanism; it was in the main the honest hatred of God-fearing men against the foulest depravity presented in a poetic and attractive form.

### Section. VIII.—The Conquest of Ireland. 1588—1610.

[*Authorities.*—The materials for the early history of Ireland are described by Professor O'Curry in his "Lectures on the Materials of Ancient Irish History," Dublin, 1861. They may be most conveniently studied by the general reader in the conpilation known as "The Annals of the Four Masters" (Dublin, 1856) edited by Dr. O'Donovan. Its ecclesiastical history is drily but accurately told by Dr. Lanigan ("Ecclesiastical History of Ireland," Dublin, 1829). The chief authorities for the earlier conquest under Henry the Second are the "Expugnatio et Topographia Hibernica," excellently edited for the Rolls Series by Mr. Dimock, and the Anglo-Norman Poem edited by M. Francisque Michel (London, Pickering, 1857). Mr. Froude has devoted especial attention to the relations of Ireland with the Tudors; but both in accuracy and soundness of judgment his work is far inferior to Mr. Brewer's examination of them in his prefaces to the State Papers of Henry the Eighth, or to Mr. Gardiner's careful and temperate account of the final conquest and settlement under

Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII. THE CONQUEST OF IRELAND. 1588-1610.

Mountjoy and Chichester ("History of England from the Accession of James the First"). The two series of "Lectures on the History of Ireland" by Mr. A. G. Richey are remarkable for their information and fairness.]

---

**The War with Spain.**

While England became "a nest of singing birds" at home, the last years of Elizabeth's reign were years of splendour and triumph abroad. With the defeat of the Armada began a series of victories which broke the power of Spain, and changed the political aspect of the world. The exhaustion of the Royal Treasury indeed soon forced Elizabeth to content herself with issuing commissions to volunteers, but the war was a national one, and the nation waged it for itself. In the year after the ruin of the Armada two hundred vessels
1589. and twenty thousand volunteers gathered at their own cost at Plymouth, under the command of Drake and Norris, plundered Corunna, and insulted the Spanish coast. A new buccaneering expedition, which made its way to the West Indies under Drake, captured the Spanish galleons, and levied contributions on the rich merchant-cities of the
1596. colonies. Philip was roused by the insult to new dreams of invasion, but his threat of a fresh Armada was met by a daring descent of the English forces upon Cadiz. The town was plundered and burnt to the ground; thirteen vessels of war were fired in its harbour, and the stores accumulated for the expedition utterly destroyed. In spite of this crushing blow a Spanish fleet gathered in the following year and
1597. set sail for the English coast; but as in the case of its predecessor, storms proved more fatal than the English guns, and the ships were wrecked and almost destroyed in the Bay of Biscay. From this moment it was through France, rather than by a direct attack, that Philip hoped to reach England. The Armada had hardly been dispersed, when the assassination of Henry the Third, the last of the line of Valois, raised Henry of Navarre to the throne; and the accession of a Protestant sovereign at once ranged the Catholics of France to a man on the side of the League and its leaders, the Guises. The League rejected Henry's claims as those of a heretic, admitted the ridiculous pretensions which Philip advanced to the vacant throne, and received the support of Spanish soldiery and Spanish treasure. This new effort of Spain, an effort whose triumph must have ended in her ruin, forced Elizabeth to aid Henry with men and money in his seven years' struggle against the overwhelming odds which seemed arrayed against him; but valuable as was her support, it was by the King's amazing courage and energy that victory was at last wrested from his foes. In spite of religious passion, the national spirit of France revolted more and more from the rule of Spain, and the King's submission to the faith held by the bulk of his subjects at last destroyed all chance of Philip's success. "Paris is well worth a mass" was the

Digitized by Google

famous phrase in which Henry explained his abandonment of the Protestant cause, but the step did more than secure Paris. It at once dashed to the ground all hopes of further resistance, it dissolved the League, and enabled the King at the head of a reunited people to force Philip to acknowledge his title and to consent to peace in the Treaty of Vervins.

1597.

With the ruin of Philip's projects in France and the assertion of English supremacy at sea, all danger from Spain passed quietly away, and Elizabeth was able to direct her undivided energies to the last work which illustrates her reign.

**Ireland.**

To understand however the final conquest of Ireland, we must retrace our steps to the reign of Henry the Second. The civilization of the island had at that time fallen far below the height which it had reached when its missionaries brought religion and learning to the shores of Northumbria. Learning had almost disappeared. The Christianity which had been a vital force in the eighth century had died into asceticism and superstition in the twelfth, and had ceased to influence the morality of the people at large. The Church, destitute of any effective organization, was powerless to do the work which it had done elsewhere in Western Europe, or to introduce order into the anarchy of warring tribes. On the contrary, it shared the anarchy around it. Its head, the Coarb, or Archbishop of Armagh, sank into the hereditary chieftain of a clan; its bishops were without dioceses, and often mere dependants of the greater monasteries. Hardly a trace of any central authority remained to knit the tribes into a single nation, though the King of Ulster claimed supremacy over his fellow-kings of Munster, Leinster, and Connaught; and even within these minor kingships the regal authority was little more than a name. The one living thing in the social and political chaos was the sept, or tribe, or clan, whose institutions remained those of the earliest stage of human civilization. Its chieftainship was hereditary, but, instead of passing from father to son, it was held by whoever was the eldest member of the ruling family at the time. The land belonging to the tribe was shared among its members, but re-divided among them at certain intervals of years. The practice of "fosterage," or adoption, bound the adopted child more closely to its foster-parents than to its family by blood. Whatever elements of improvement or progress had been introduced into the island at an earlier time disappeared in the long and destructive struggle with the Danes. The coast-towns, such as Dublin or Waterford, which the invaders founded, remained Danish in blood and manners, and at feud with the Celtic tribes around them, though sometimes forced by the fortunes of war to pay tribute, and to accept, in name at least, the overlordship of the Irish Kings. It was through these towns however that the intercourse with England, which had practically ceased since the eighth century, was to some extent

Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII. THE CONQUEST OF IRELAND. 1588-1610.

renewed. Cut off from the native Church of the island by national antipathy, the Danish coast-cities applied to the See of Canterbury for the ordination of their bishops, and acknowledged a right of spiritual supervision in Lanfranc and Anselm. The relations thus formed were drawn closer by the slave-trade, which the Conqueror and Bishop Wulfstan succeeded for a time in suppressing at Bristol, but which appears to have quickly revived. At the time of Henry the Second's accession Ireland was full of Englishmen, who had been kidnapped and sold into slavery, in spite of Royal prohibitions and the spiritual menaces of the English Church. The slave-trade afforded a legitimate pretext for war, had a pretext been needed by the ambition of Henry the Second; and within a few months of that King's coronation John of Salisbury was despatched to obtain the Papal sanction for his invasion of the island. The enterprise, as it was laid before Pope Hadrian IV., took the colour of a crusade. The isolation of Ireland from the general body of Christendom, the absence of learning and civilization, the scandalous vices of its people, were alleged as the grounds of Henry's action. It was the general belief of the time that all islands fell under the jurisdiction of the Papal See, and it was as a possession of the Roman Church that Henry sought Hadrian's permission to enter Ireland. His aim was "to enlarge the bounds of the Church, to restrain the progress of vices, to correct the manners of its people and to plant virtue among them, and to increase the Christian religion." He engaged to "subject the people to laws, to extirpate vicious customs, to respect the rights of the native Churches, and to enforce the payment of Peter's pence" as a recognition of the overlordship of the Roman See. Hadrian by his bull approved the enterprise as one prompted by "the ardour of faith and love of religion," and declared his will that the people of Ireland should receive Henry with all honour, and revere him as their lord. The Papal bull was produced in a great council of the English baronage, but the opposition was strong enough to force on Henry a temporary abandonment of his schemes, and his energies were diverted for the moment to plans of continental aggrandizement.

Strongbow.

Fourteen years had passed when an Irish chieftain, Dermot, King of Leinster, presented himself at Henry's Court, and did homage to him for the dominions from which he had been driven in one of the endless civil wars which distracted the island. Dermot returned to Ireland with promises of aid from the English knighthood; and was soon followed by Robert FitzStephen, a son of the Constable of Cardigan, with a small band of a hundred and forty knights, sixty men-at-arms, and three or four hundred Welsh archers. Small as was the number of the adventurers, their horses and arms proved irresistible to the Irish

1169.

kernes; a sally of the men of Wexford was avenged by the storm of their town; the Ossory clans were defeated with a terrible slaughter,

Digitized by Google

and Dermot, seizing a head from the heap of trophies which his men piled at his feet, tore off in savage triumph its nose and lips with his teeth. The arrival of fresh forces heralded the coming of Richard of Clare, Earl of Pembroke and Striguil, a ruined baron who bore the nickname of Strongbow, and who in defiance of Henry's prohibition landed with a force of fifteen hundred men, as Dermot's mercenary, near Waterford. The city was at once stormed, and the united forces of the Earl and King marched to the siege of Dublin. In spite of a relief attempted by the King of Connaught, who was recognized as overking of the island by the rest of the tribes, Dublin was taken by surprise; and the marriage of Earl Richard with Eva, Dermot's daughter, left him on the death of his father-in-law, which followed quickly on these successes, master of his kingdom of Leinster. The new lord had soon, however, to hurry back to England, and appease the jealousy of Henry by the surrender of Dublin to the Crown, by doing homage for Leinster as an English lordship, and by accompanying the King in his voyage to the new dominion which the adventurers had won. Had Henry been allowed by fortune to carry out his purpose, the conquest of Ireland would now have been accomplished. The King of Connaught indeed and the chiefs of Ulster refused him homage, but the rest of the Irish tribes owned his suzerainty; the bishops in synod at Cashel recognized him as their lord; and he was preparing to penetrate to the north and west, and to secure his conquest by a systematic erection of castles throughout the country, when the troubles which followed on the murder of Archbishop Thomas recalled him hurriedly to Normandy. The lost opportunity never again arrived. Connaught, indeed, bowed to a nominal acknowledgment of Henry's overlordship; John De Courcy penetrated into Ulster and established himself at Downpatrick; and the King planned for a while the establishment of his youngest son, John, as Lord of Ireland. But the levity of the young prince, who mocked the rude dresses of the native chieftains, and plucked them in insult by the beard, compelled his recall; and nothing but the feuds and weakness of the Irish tribes enabled the adventurers to hold the districts of Drogheda, Dublin, Wexford, Waterford, and Cork, which formed what was known as the "English Pale."

**The Barons of the Pale.**

Had the Irish driven their invaders into the sea, or the English succeeded in the complete conquest of Ireland, the misery of its after history might have been avoided. A struggle such as that of Scotland under Bruce might have produced a spirit of patriotism and national union, which would have formed a people out of the mass of warring clans. A conquest such as that of England by the Normans would have spread at any rate the law, the order, the peace, and civilization of the conquering country over the length and breadth of the conquered. Unhappily Ireland, while powerless to effect its deliverance,



Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII.
THE CONQUEST OF IRELAND.
1588-1610.

was strong enough to hold its assailants at bay. The country was broken into two halves, whose conflict has never ceased. The barbarism of the native tribes was only intensified by their hatred of the civilized intruders. The intruders themselves, penned up in the narrow limits of the Pale, fell rapidly to the level of the Irish barbarism. All the lawlessness, the ferocity, the narrowness of feudalism broke out unchecked in the horde of adventurers who held the land by their sword. It needed the stern vengeance of John, whose army stormed their strongholds, and drove the leading barons into exile, to preserve
1212 even their fealty to the English Crown. John divided the Pale into counties, and ordered the observance of the English law; but the departure of his army was the signal for a return of the anarchy which he had trampled under foot. Every Irishman without the Pale was deemed an enemy and a robber, nor was his murder cognizable by the law. Half the subsistence of the barons was drawn from their forays across the border, and these forays were avenged by incursions of native marauders, which carried havoc to the walls of Dublin. The English settlers in the Pale itself were harried and oppressed by enemy and protector alike; while the feuds of baron with baron wasted their strength, and prevented any effective combination against the Irish enemy. The landing of a Scotch force after Bannochburn with Edward Bruce at its head, and a general rising of the clans on its
1316. appearance, drove indeed the barons to a momentary union; and in the bloody field of Athenry their valour was proved by the slaughter of eleven thousand of their foes, and the almost complete extinction of the great sept of the O'Connors. But with victory returned anarchy and degradation. The barons sank more and more into Irish chieftains; the FitzMaurices, who became Earls of Desmond, and whose great territory in the south was erected into a County Palatine, adopted the dress and manners of the natives around them; and the provisions of the Statute of Kilkenny were fruitless to check the growth of this evil. The Statute forbade the adoption by any man of English blood of the Irish language or name or dress; it enforced the use of English law, and made that of the native or Brehon law, which had crept into the Pale, an act of treason; it made treasonable any marriage
1367. of the Englishry with persons of Irish blood, or any adoption of English children by Irish foster-fathers. The anxiety with which the English Government watched the degradation which its laws failed to avert stirred it at last to a serious effort for the conquest and organization of the island. In one of the intervals of peace which chequered his stormy reign, Richard the Second landed with an army of overpowering strength, before the advance of which into the interior all notion of resistance was quickly abandoned. Seventy-five chiefs of clans did him homage; and the four overkings of the island followed him to Dublin, and submitted to receive the order of Knighthood.

Digitized by Google

The King devoted himself eagerly to the work of forming an effective government by the enforcement of the laws, the removal of tyrannical officers, and the conciliation of the native tribes; but the troubles in England soon interrupted his efforts, and all traces of his work vanished with the embarkation of his soldiers.

With the renewal of the French wars, and the outburst of the Wars of the Roses, Ireland was again left to itself. The policy of Henry the Seventh threw power without stint into the hands of the nobles of the Pale. When the Earl of Desmond defied the authority of the Government, Henry made him Lord Deputy. "All Ireland cannot rule this man," complained the Council. "Then shall he rule all Ireland," replied the King. In the opening of his successor's reign English influence reached its lowest point of depression. The great Norman lords of the south, the Butlers and Geraldines, the De la Poers and the Fitzpatricks, though subjects in name, were in fact defiant of royal authority. In manners and outer seeming they had sunk into mere natives; their feuds were as incessant as those of the Irish septs; and their despotism over the miserable inhabitants of the Pale combined the horrors of feudal oppression with those of Celtic anarchy. Crushed by taxation, by oppression, by misgovernment, plundered alike by Celtic marauders and by the troops levied to disperse them, the wretched descendants of the first English settlers preferred even Irish misrule to English "order," and the border of the Pale retreated steadily towards Dublin. The towns of the seaboard, sheltered by their walls and their municipal self-government, formed the only exceptions to the general chaos; elsewhere throughout its dominions the English Government, though still strong enough to break down any open revolt, was a mere phantom of rule. From the Celtic tribes without the Pale even the remnant of civilization and of native union which had lingered on to the time of Strongbow had vanished away. The feuds of the Irish septs were as bitter as their hatred of the stranger; and the Government at Dublin found it easy to maintain a strife, which saved it the necessity of self-defence, among a people whose "nature is such that for money one shall have the son to war against his father, and the father against his child." During the first thirty years of the sixteenth century, the annals of the country which remained under native rule record more than a hundred raids and battles between clans of the north alone. But the time was at last come for a vigorous attempt on the part of England to introduce order into this chaos of turbulence and misrule. To Henry the Eighth the policy which had been pursued by his father was utterly hateful. His purpose was to rule in Ireland as thoroughly and effectively as he ruled in England, and during the latter half of his reign he bent his whole energies to accomplish this aim. From the first hours of his accession, indeed, the Irish lords felt the heavier hand



Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII.

THE CONQUEST OF IRELAND. 1588-1610.

of a master; and the Geraldines, who had been suffered under the preceding reign to govern Ireland in the name of the Crown, were quick to discover that the Crown would no longer stoop to be their tool. They resolved to frighten England again into a conviction of its helplessness; and the rising of Lord Thomas Fitzgerald followed the usual fashion of Irish revolts. A murder of the Archbishop of Dublin, a capture of the city, a repulse before its castle, a harrying of the Pale, ended in a sudden disappearance of the rebels among the bogs and forests of the border on the advance of the English forces. It had been usual to meet such an onset as this by a raid of the same character, by a corresponding failure before the castle of the rebellious noble, and a retreat like his own, which served as a preliminary to negotiations and a compromise. Unluckily for the Geraldines, Henry had resolved to take Ireland seriously in hand, and he had Cromwell to execute his will. Skeffington, the new Lord Deputy, brought with him a train of artillery, which worked a startling change in the political aspect of the island. The castles which had hitherto sheltered rebellion were battered into ruins. Maynooth, the impregnable stronghold from which the Geraldines threatened Dublin, and ruled the Pale at their will, was beaten down in a fortnight. So crushing and unforeseen was the blow that resistance was at once at an end. Not only was the power of the great Norman house which had towered over Ireland utterly broken, but only a single boy was left to preserve its name.

1535.

**Henry the Eighth.**

With the fall of the Geraldines Ireland felt itself in a master's grasp. "Irishmen," wrote one of the Lord Justices to Cromwell, "were never in such fear as now. The King's sessions are being kept in five shires more than formerly." Not only were the Englishmen of the Pale at Henry's feet, but the kernes of Wicklow and Wexford sent in their submission; and for the first time in men's memory an English army appeared in Munster and reduced the south to obedience. The great castle of the O'Briens, which guarded the passage of the Shannon, was carried by assault, and its fall carried with it the submission of Clare. The capture of Athlone brought about the reduction of Connaught, and assured the loyalty of the great Norman house of the De Burghs or Bourkes, who had assumed an almost Royal authority in the west. The resistance of the tribes of the north was broken in the victory of Bellahoe. In seven years, partly through the vigour of Skeffington's successor, Lord Leonard Grey, and still more through the resolute will of Henry and Cromwell, the power of the Crown, which had been limited to the walls of Dublin, was acknowledged over the length and breadth of Ireland. But submission was far from being all that Henry desired. His aim was to civilize the people whom he had conquered—to rule not by force but by law. But the only conception of law which the King or his ministers could frame was that of English law. The customary law which prevailed without the Pale, the native system of

1335-1542.

Digitized by Google

clan government and common tenure of land by the tribe, as well as the poetry and literature which threw their lustre over the Irish tongue, were either unknown to the English statesmen, or despised by them as barbarous. The one mode of civilizing Ireland and redressing its chaotic misrule which presented itself to their minds, was that of destroying the whole Celtic tradition of the Irish people—that of "making Ireland English" in manners, in law, and in tongue. The Deputy, Parliament, Judges, Sheriffs, which already existed within the Pale, furnished a faint copy of English institutions; and these, it was hoped, might be gradually extended over the whole island. The English language and mode of life would follow, it was believed, the English law. The one effectual way of bringing about such a change as this lay in a complete conquest of the island, and in its colonization by English settlers; but from this course, pressed on him as it was by his own lieutenants and by the settlers of the Pale, even the iron will of Henry shrank. It was at once too bloody and too expensive. To win over the chiefs, to turn them by policy and a patient generosity into English nobles, to use the traditional devotion of their tribal dependents as a means of diffusing the new civilization of their chiefs, to trust to time and steady government for the gradual reformation of the country, was a policy safer, cheaper, more humane, and more statesmanlike. It was this system which, even before the fall of the Geraldines, Henry had resolved to adopt; and it was this which he pressed on Ireland when the conquest laid it at his feet. The chiefs were to be persuaded of the advantage of justice and legal rule. Their fear of any purpose to "expel them from their lands and dominions lawfully possessed" was to be dispelled by a promise "to conserve them as their own." Even their remonstrances against the introduction of English law were to be regarded, and the course of justice to be enforced or mitigated according to the circumstances of the country. In the resumption of lands or rights which clearly belonged to the Crown "sober ways, politic shifts, and amiable persuasions" were to be preferred to rigorous dealing. It was this system of conciliation which was in the main carried out by the English Government under Henry and his two successors. Chieftain after chieftain was won over to the acceptance of the indenture which guaranteed him in the possession of his lands, and left his authority over his tribesmen untouched, on conditions of a pledge of loyalty, of abstinence from illegal wars and exactions on his fellow-subjects, and of rendering a fixed tribute and service in war-time to the Crown. The sole test of loyalty demanded was the acceptance of an English title, and the education of a son at the English court; though in some cases, like that of the O'Neills, a promise was exacted to use the English language and dress, and to encourage tillage and husbandry. Compliance with conditions such as these was procured, not merely by the terror of the Royal name, but by heavy bribes. The

Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII.
THE CONQUEST OF IRELAND.
1588-1610.

chieftains in fact profited greatly by the change. Not only were the lands of the suppressed abbeys granted to them on their assumption of their new titles, but the English law-courts, ignoring the Irish custom by which the land belonged to the tribe at large, regarded the chiefs as sole proprietors of the soil.

The Reformation.

The assumption by Henry of the title of King of Ireland, in the place of the older title of Lord, which followed naturally on his quarrel with the Papacy, was the fitting crown of the new system. The merits of the system were unquestionable; its faults were such as a statesman of that day could hardly be expected to perceive. The prohibition of the national dress, customs, laws, and language must have seemed to the Tudor politicians merely the suppression of a barbarism which stood in the way of all improvement; and the error of their attempt could only be felt, if felt at all, in the districts without the Pale. Their firm and conciliatory policy must in the end have won, but for the fatal blunder which plunged Ireland into religious strife at the moment when her civil strife seemed about to come to an end. Ever since Strongbow's landing there had been no one Irish Church, simply because there had been no one Irish nation. There was not the slightest difference in doctrine or discipline between the Church without the Pale and the Church within it. But within the Pale the clergy were exclusively of English blood and speech, and without it they were exclusively of Irish. Irishmen were shut out by law from abbeys and churches within the English boundary; and the ill-will of the natives shut out Englishmen from churches and abbeys outside it. As to the religious state of the country, it was much on a level with its political condition. Feuds and misrule had told fatally on ecclesiastical discipline. The bishops were political officers, or hard fighters like the chiefs around them; their sees were neglected, their cathedrals abandoned to decay. Through whole dioceses the churches lay in ruins and without priests. The only preaching done in the country was done by the begging friars, and in Ireland the numbers of friars' houses were few. "If the King do not provide a remedy," it was said in 1525, "there will be no more Christentie than in the middle of Turkey." Unfortunately the remedy which Henry provided was worse than the disease. Politically Ireland was one with England, and the great revolution which was severing the one country from the Papacy extended itself naturally to the other. The results of it indeed at first seemed small enough. The Supremacy, a question which had convulsed England, passed over into Ireland to meet its only obstacle in a general indifference. Everybody was ready to accept it without a thought of its consequences. The bishops and clergy within the Pale bent to the King's will as easily as their fellows in England, and their example was followed by at least four prelates of dioceses without the Pale. The native chieftains made no more scruple than the Lords of the Council

Digitized by Google

in renouncing obedience to the Bishop of Rome, and in acknowledging Henry as the "Supreme Head of the Church of England and Ireland under Christ." There was none of the resistance to the dissolution of the abbeys which had been witnessed on the other side of the Channel, and the greedy chieftains showed themselves perfectly willing to share the plunder of the Church. But the results of the measure were fatal to the little culture and religion which even the past centuries of disorder had spared. Such as they were, the religious houses were the only schools which Ireland contained. The system of vicars, so general in England, was rare in Ireland; churches in the patronage of the abbeys were for the most part served by the religious themselves, and the dissolution of their houses suspended public worship over large districts of the country. The friars, hitherto the only preachers, and who continued to labour and teach in spite of the efforts of the Government, were thrown necessarily into a position of antagonism to the English rule.

**Protestantism in Ireland.**

Had the ecclesiastical changes which were forced on the country ended here, however, little harm would in the end have been done. But in England the breach with Rome, the destruction of the monastic orders, and the establishment of the Supremacy, had roused in the people itself a desire for theological change which Henry, however grudgingly, had little by little to satisfy. In Ireland the spirit of the Reformation never existed among the people at all. They accepted the legislative measures passed in the English Parliament without any dream of theological consequences, or of any change in the doctrine or ceremonies of the Church. Not a single voice demanded the abolition of pilgrimages, or the destruction of images, or the reform of public worship. The mission of Archbishop Browne "for the plucking down of idols and extinguishing of idolatry" was the first step in the long effort of the English Government to force a new faith on a people who to a man clung passionately to their old religion. Browne's attempts at "tuning the pulpits" were met by a sullen and significant opposition. "Neither by gentle exhortation," the Primate wrote to Cromwell, "nor by evangelical instruction, neither by oath of them solemnly taken, nor yet by threats of sharp correction may I persuade or induce any, whether religious or secular, since my coming over, once to preach the Word of God nor the just title of our illustrious Prince." Even the acceptance of the Supremacy, which had been so quietly effected, was brought into question when its results became clear. The bishops abstained from compliance with the order to erase the Pope's name out of their mass-books. The pulpits remained steadily silent. When Browne ordered the destruction of the images and relics in his own cathedral, he had to report that the prior and canons "find them so sweet for their gain that they heed not my words." Cromwell, however, was resolute for a religious uniformity between the two islands, and the

1535.

Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII. THE CONQUEST OF IRELAND. 1588-1610.

Primate borrowed some of his patron's vigour. Recalcitrant priests were thrown into prison, images were plucked down from the roodloft, and the most venerable of Irish relics, the Staff of St. Patrick, was burnt in the market-place. But he found no support in his vigour, save from across the Channel. The Irish Council was cold. The Lord Deputy knelt to say prayers before the Rood at Tuan. A sullen, dogged opposition baffled his efforts, till the triumph of the old Catholic party at the close of Henry's reign forced him to a brief repose. With the accession of Edward the Sixth, however, the system of change was renewed with all the energy of Protestant zeal. The bishops were summoned before the Deputy, Sir Anthony St. Leger, to receive the new English Liturgy, which, though written in a tongue as strange to the native Irish as Latin itself, was now to supersede the Latin service-book in every diocese. The order was the signal for an open strife. "Now shall every illiterate fellow read Mass," burst forth Dowding, the Archbishop of Armagh, as he flung out of the chamber with all but one of his suffragans at his heels. Browne, on the other hand, was followed in his profession of obedience by the Bishops of Meath, Limerick, and Kildare. The Government, however, was far from quailing before the division of the episcopate. Dowding was driven from the country, and the vacant sees were filled with Protestants like Bale, of the most advanced type. But no change could be wrought by measures such as these on the opinions of the people themselves. The new episcopal reformers spoke no Irish, and of their English sermons not a word was understood by the rude kernes around the pulpit. The native priests remained silent. "As for preaching we have none," reports a zealous Protestant, "without which the ignorant can have no knowledge." The prelates who used the new prayer-book were simply regarded as heretics. The Bishop of Meath was assured by one of his flock that, "if the country wist how, they would eat you." Protestantism had failed to wrest a single Irishman from his older convictions, but it succeeded in uniting all Ireland against the Crown. The old political distinctions which had been produced by the conquest of Strongbow faded before the new struggle for a common faith. The population within the Pale and without it became one, "not as the Irish nation," it has been acutely said, "but as Catholics." A new sense of national identity was found in the identity of religion. "Both English and Irish begin to oppose your Lordship's orders," wrote Browne to Cromwell, "and to lay aside their national old quarrels."

1551.

**Ireland and Mary.**

With the accession of Mary the shadowy form of this earlier Irish Protestantism melted quietly away. There were no Protestants in Ireland save the new Bishops; and when Bale had fled over the sea, and his fellow-prelates had been deprived, the Church resumed its old appearance. No attempt, indeed, was made to restore the monasteries;

Digitized by Google

and Mary exercised her supremacy, deposed and appointed bishops, and repudiated Papal interference with her ecclesiastical acts, as vigorously as her father. But the Mass was restored, the old modes of religious worship were again held in honour, and religious dissension between the Government and its Irish subjects was for the time at an end. With the close, however, of one danger came the rise of another. England was growing tired of the policy of conciliation which had been steadily pursued by Henry the Eighth and his successor. As yet it had been rewarded with precisely the sort of success which Wolsey had anticipated: the chiefs had come quietly in to the plan, and their septs had followed them in submission to the new order. "The winning of the Earl of Desmond was the winning of the rest of Munster with small charges. The making O'Brien an Earl made all that county obedient." The Macwilliam became Lord Clanrickard, and the Fitzpatricks Barons of Upper Ossory. The visit of the great northern chief, who had accepted the title of Earl of Tyrone, to the English Court was regarded as a marked step in the process of civilization. In the south, where the system of English law was slowly spreading, the chieftains sate on the bench side by side with the English justices of the peace; and something had been done to check the feuds and disorder of the wild tribes between Limerick and Tipperary. "Men may pass quietly throughout these countries without danger of robbery or other displeasure." In the Clanrickard county, once wasted with war, "ploughing increaseth daily." In Tyrone and the north, indeed, the old disorder reigned without a check; and everywhere the process of improvement tried the temper of the English Deputies by the slowness of its advance. The only hope of any real progress lay in patience; and there were signs that the Government at Dublin found it hard to wait. The "rough handling" of the chiefs by Sir Edward Bellingham, the Lord Deputy of the Protector Somerset, roused a spirit of revolt that only subsided when the poverty of the Exchequer forced him to withdraw the garrisons he had planted in the heart of the country. Lord Sussex made raid after raid to no purpose on the obstinate tribes of the north, burning in one the Cathedral of Armagh and three other churches. A far more serious breach in the system of conciliation was made when the project of English colonization which Henry had steadily rejected was adopted by the same Lord Deputy. The country of the O'Connors, which was assigned to English settlers, was made shire-land under the names of King's and Queen's County, in honour of Philip and Mary; and a savage warfare began at once between the planters and the dispossessed septs, which only ended in the following reign in the extermination of the Irishmen. Commissioners were appointed to survey waste lands, with the aim of carrying the work of colonization into other districts, when the accession of Elizabeth and the caution

Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII.
THE CONQUEST OF IRELAND.
1588-1610.
Ireland and Elizabeth.

of Cecil checked further efforts in this direction, and resumed the safer though more tedious policy of Henry the Eighth.

The alarm however at English aggression had already spread among the natives; and its result was seen in a revolt of the north, and in the rise of a leader far more vigorous and able than any with whom the Government had had as yet to contend. The acceptance of the Earldom of Tyrone by the chief of the O'Neills brought about the inevitable conflict between the system of succession recognized by English and that recognized by Irish law. On the death of the Earl, England acknowledged his eldest son as the heir of his Earldom; while the sept maintained their older right of choosing a chief from among the members of the family, and preferred a younger son of less doubtful legitimacy. Sussex marched northward to settle the question by force of arms; but ere he could reach Ulster the activity of Shane O'Neill had quelled the disaffection of his rivals, the O'Donnells of Donegal, and won over the Scots of Antrim. "Never before," wrote Sussex, "durst Scot or Irishman look Englishman in the face in plain or wood since I came here;" but Shane had fired his men with a new courage, and charging the Deputy's army with a force hardly half its number, drove it back in rout on Armagh. A promise of pardon induced him to visit London, and make an illusory submission, but he was no sooner safe home again than its terms were set aside; and after a wearisome struggle, in which Shane foiled the efforts of the Lord Deputy to entrap or to poison him, he remained virtually master of the north. His success stirred larger dreams of ambition; he invaded Connaught, and pressed Clanrickard hard; while he replied to the remonstrances of the Council at Dublin with a wild defiance. "By the sword I have won these lands," he answered, "and by the sword will I keep them." But defiance broke idly against the skill and vigour of Sir Henry Sidney, who succeeded Sussex as Lord Deputy. The rival septs of the north were drawn into a rising against O'Neill, while the English army advanced from the Pale; and Shane, defeated by the O'Donnells, took refuge in Antrim, and was hewn to pieces in a drunken squabble by his Scottish entertainers. The victory of Sidney won ten years of
1567. peace for the wretched country; but Ireland had already been fixed on by the Catholic powers of the Continent as the ground on which they could with most advantage fight out their quarrel with Elizabeth. Practically indeed the religious question hardly existed there. The religious policy of the Protectorate had indeed been resumed on the Queen's accession; Rome was again renounced, the new Act of Uniformity forced the English prayer-book on the island, and compelled attendance at the services in which it was used. There was as before a general air of compliance with the law; even in the districts without the Pale the bishops generally conformed, and the only exceptions of which we have any information were to be found in the extreme south and in the north,

Digitized by Google

where resistance was distant enough to be safe. But the real cause of this apparent submission to the Act lay in the fact that it remained, and necessarily remained, a dead letter. It was impossible to find any considerable number of English ministers, or of Irish priests acquainted with English. Meath was one of the most civilized dioceses, and out of a hundred curates in it hardly ten knew any tongue save their own. The promise that the service-book should be translated into Irish was never fulfilled, and the final clause of the Act itself authorized the use of a Latin rendering of it till further order could be taken. But this, like its other provisions, was ignored, and throughout Elizabeth's reign the gentry of the Pale went unquestioned to Mass. There was in fact no religious persecution, and in the many complaints of Shane O'Neill we find no mention of a religious grievance. But this was far from being the view of Rome or of Spain, of the Jesuit missionaries, or of the Irish exiles abroad. They represented, and perhaps believed, the Irish people to be writhing under a religious oppression which they were burning to shake off. They saw in the Irish loyalty to Catholicism a lever for overthrowing the great heretic Queen. Stukely, an Irish refugee, pressed on the Pope and Spain the policy of a descent on Ireland; and his pressure brought about at last the landing of a small Spanish force on the shores of Kerry. In spite however of the arrival of a Papal Legate with the blessing of the Holy See, the attempt ended in a miserable failure. The fort of Smerwick, in which the invaders entrenched themselves, was forced to surrender, and its garrison put ruthlessly to the sword. The Earl of Desmond, who after long indecision rose to support them, was defeated and hunted over his own country, which the panic-born cruelty of his pursuers harried into a wilderness. Pitiless as it was, the work done in Munster spread a terror over the land which served England in good stead when the struggle with Catholicism culminated in the fight with the Armada; and not a chieftain stirred during that memorable year save to massacre the miserable men who were shipwrecked along the coast of Bantry or Sligo.

1561.

1579.

**Conquest and Settlement.**

The power of the Government was from this moment recognized everywhere throughout the land. But it was a power founded solely on terror; and the outrages and exactions of the soldiery, who had been flushed with rapine and bloodshed in the south, sowed during the years which followed its reduction the seeds of a revolt more formidable than any which Elizabeth had yet encountered. The tribes of Ulster, divided by the policy of Sidney, were again united by the common hatred of their oppressors; and in Hugh O'Neill they found a leader of even greater ability than Shane himself. Hugh had been brought up at the English court, and was in manners and bearing an Englishman; he had been rewarded for his steady loyalty in previous contests by a grant of the Earldom of Tyrone; and had secured aid from the

Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII. THE CONQUEST OF IRELAND. 1588-1610.

Government, in his contest with a rival chieftain of his clan, by an offer to introduce the English laws and shire-system into his new country. But he was no sooner undisputed master of the north than his tune gradually changed. Whether from a long-formed plan, or from suspicion of English designs upon himself, he at last took a position of open defiance. It was at the moment when the Treaty of Vervins, and the wreck of the second Armada, freed Elizabeth's hands from the struggle with Spain, that the revolt of the great northern tribe of the O'Neill broke the quiet which had prevailed since the victories of Lord Grey, and forced the Irish question again on the Queen's
1598. attention. The tide of her recent triumphs seemed at first to have turned. A defeat of the English forces in Tyrone brought a general rising of the northern tribes; and a great effort made in the following year for the suppression of the growing revolt failed through the vanity and disobedience of the Queen's Lieutenant, the young Earl of Essex,
1599. a favourite who recompensed her indulgence on his recall by a puerile sedition which brought him to the block. His successor, Lord Mountjoy, found himself master on his arrival of only a few miles round Dublin; but in three years the revolt was at an end. A Spanish force
1601-3. which landed to support it at Kinsale was driven to surrender; a line of forts secured the country as the English mastered it; all open opposition was crushed out by the energy and the ruthlessness of the new Lieutenant; and a famine which followed on his ravages completed the devastating work of the sword. Hugh O'Neill was brought in triumph to Dublin; the Earl of Desmond, who had again roused Munster into revolt, fled for refuge to Spain; and the work of conquest was at last brought to a close. Under the administration of Mountjoy's successor, Sir Arthur Chichester, an able and determined effort was made for the settlement of the conquered province by the general introduction of a purely English system of government, jus-
1605-8. tice, and property. Every vestige of the old Celtic constitution of the country was rejected as "barbarous." The tribal authority of the chiefs was taken from them by law. They were reduced to the position of great nobles and landowners, while their tribesmen rose from subjects into tenants, owing only fixed and customary dues and services to their lords. The tribal system of property in common was set aside, and the communal holdings of the tribesmen turned into the copyholds of English law. In the same way the chieftains were stripped of their hereditary jurisdiction, and the English system of judges and trial by jury substituted for their proceedings under Brehon or customary law. To all this the Celts opposed the tenacious obstinacy of their race. Irish juries, then as now, refused to convict. Glad as the tribesmen were to be freed from the arbitrary exactions of their chiefs, they held them for chieftains still. The attempt made by Chichester, under pressure from England, to introduce the English

Digitized by Google

uniformity of religion ended in utter failure; for the Englishry of the Pale remained as Catholic as the native Irishry; and the sole result of the measure was to build up a new Irish people out of both on the common basis of religion. Much, however, had been done by the firm yet moderate government of the Lieutenant, and signs were already appearing of a disposition on the part of the people to conform gradually to the new usages, when the English Council under Elizabeth's successor suddenly resolved upon and carried through the great revolutionary measure which is known as the Colonization of Ulster. The pacific and conservative policy of Chichester was abandoned for a vast policy of spoliation; two-thirds of the north of Ireland was declared to have been confiscated to the Crown by the part its possessors had taken in a recent effort at revolt; and the lands which were thus gained were allotted to new settlers of Scotch and English extraction. In its material results the Plantation of Ulster was undoubtedly a brilliant success. Farms and homesteads, churches and mills rose fast amidst the desolate wilds of Tyrone. The Corporation of London undertook the colonization of Derry, and gave to the little town the name which its heroic defence has made so famous. The foundations of the economic prosperity which has raised Ulster high above the rest of Ireland in wealth and intelligence were undoubtedly laid in the confiscation of 1610: nor did the measure meet with any opposition at the time save that of secret discontent. The evicted natives withdrew sullenly to the lands which had been left them by the spoiler; but all faith in English justice had been torn from the minds of the Irishry, and the seed had been sown of that fatal harvest of distrust and disaffection, which was to be reaped through tyranny and massacre in the age to come.

1610

**The Death of Elizabeth.**

The colonization of Ulster has carried us beyond the limits of our present story. The triumph of Mountjoy flung its lustre over the last days of Elizabeth, but no outer triumph could break the gloom which gathered round the dying Queen. Lonely as she had always been, her loneliness deepened as she drew towards the grave. The statesmen and warriors of her earlier days had dropped one by one from her Council-board; and their successors were watching her last moments, and intriguing for favour in the coming reign. The old splendour of her Court waned and disappeared. Only officials remained about her, "the other of the Council and nobility estrange themselves by all occasions." As she passed along in her progresses, the people whose applause she courted remained cold and silent. The temper of the age, in fact, was changing, and isolating her as it changed. Her own England, the England which had grown up around her, serious, moral, prosaic, shrank coldly from this child of earth and the Renascence, brilliant, fanciful, unscrupulous, irreligious. She had enjoyed life as the men of her day enjoyed it, and now that

Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII. THE CONQUEST OF IRELAND. 1588-1610.

they were gone she clung to it with a fierce tenacity. She hunted, she danced, she jested with her young favourites, she coquetted and scolded and frolicked at sixty-seven as she had done at thirty. "The Queen," wrote a courtier a few months before her death, "was never so gallant these many years, nor so set upon jollity." She persisted, in spite of opposition, in her gorgeous progresses from country-house to country-house. She clung to business as of old, and rated in her usual fashion "one who minded not to giving up some matter of account." But death crept on. Her face became haggard, and her frame shrank almost to a skeleton. At last her taste for finery disappeared, and she refused to change her dresses for a week together. A strange melancholy settled down on her: "she held in her hand," says one who saw her in her last days, "a golden cup, which she often put to her lips: but in truth her heart seemed too full to need more filling." Gradually her mind gave way. She lost her memory, the violence of her temper became unbearable, her very courage seemed to forsake her. She called for a sword to lie constantly beside her, and thrust it from time to time through the arras, as if she heard murderers stirring there. Food and rest became alike distasteful. She sate day and night propped up with pillows on a stool, her finger on her lip, her eyes fixed on the floor, without a word. If she once broke the silence, it was with a flash of her old queenliness. Cecil asserted that she "must" go to bed, and the word roused her like a trumpet. "Must!" she exclaimed; "is *must* a word to be addressed to princes? Little man, little man! thy father, if he had been alive, durst not have used that word." Then, as her anger spent itself, she sank into her old dejection. "Thou art so presumptuous," she said, "because thou knowest I shall die." She rallied once more when the ministers beside her bed named Lord Beauchamp, the heir to the Suffolk claim, as a possible successor. "I will have no rogue's son," she cried hoarsely, "in my seat." But she gave no sign, save a motion of the head, at the mention of the King of Scots. She was in fact fast becoming insensible; and early the next morning the life of Elizabeth, a life so great, so strange and lonely in its greatness, passed quietly away.

Digitized by Google

# CHAPTER VIII.

## PURITAN ENGLAND.

### Section I.—The Puritans. 1583–1603.

[*Authorities.*—For the primary facts of the ecclesiastical history of this time, Strype's "Annals," and his lives of Grindal and Whitgift. Neal's "History of the Puritans," besides its inaccuracies, contains little for this period which is not taken from the more colourless Strype. For the origin of the Presbyterian movement, see the "Discourse of the Troubles at Frankfort, 1576," often republished; for its later contest with Elizabeth, Mr. Maskell's "Martin Marprelate," which gives copious extracts from the rare pamphlets printed under that name. Mr. Hallam's account of the whole struggle ("Constitutional History," caps. iv. and vii.) is admirable for its fulness, lucidity, and impartiality. Wallington's "Diary" gives us the common life of Puritanism; its higher side is shown in Mrs. Hutchinson's Memoirs of her Husband, and in the early life of Milton, as told in Mr. Masson's biography.]

The Bible.

NO GREATER moral change ever passed over a nation than passed over England during the years which parted the middle of the reign of Elizabeth from the meeting of the Long Parliament. England became the people of a book, and that book was the Bible. It was as yet the one English book which was familiar to every Englishman; it was read at churches and read at home, and everywhere its words, as they fell on ears which custom had not deadened to their force and beauty, kindled a startling enthusiasm. When Bishop Bonner set up the first six Bibles in St. Paul's "many well-disposed people used much to resort to the hearing thereof, especially when they could get any that had an audible voice to read to them. . . . One John Porter used sometimes to be occupied in that goodly exercise, to the edifying of himself as well as others. This Porter was a fresh young man and of a big stature; and great multitudes would resort thither to hear him, because he could read well and had an audible voice." The popularity of the Bible was owing to other causes besides that of religion. The whole prose literature of England, save the forgotten tracts of Wyclif, has grown up since the translation of the Scriptures by Tyndall and Coverdale. No history, no romance, no poetry, save the little-known verse of Chaucer, existed for any practical purpose in the English tongue when the Bible was ordered to be set up in churches. Sunday after Sunday, day after day, the crowds that gathered round Bonner's

Digitized by Google

Bibles in the nave of St. Paul's, or the family group that hung on the words of the Geneva Bible in the devotional exercises at home, were leavened with a new literature. Legends and annals, war song and psalm, State-rolls and biographies, the mighty voices of prophets, the parables of Evangelists, stories of mission journeys, of perils by the sea and among the heathen, philosophic arguments, apocalyptic visions, all were flung broadcast over minds unoccupied for the most part by any rival learning. The disclosure of the stores of Greek literature had wrought the revolution of the Renascence. The disclosure of the older mass of Hebrew literature wrought the revolution of the Reformation. But the one revolution was far deeper and wider in its effects than the other. No version could transfer to another tongue the peculiar charm of language which gave their value to the authors of Greece and Rome. Classical letters, therefore, remained in the possession of the learned, that is of the few; and among these, with the exception of Colet and More, or of the pedants who revived a Pagan worship in the gardens of the Florentine Academy, their direct influence was purely intellectual. But the tongue of the Hebrew, the idiom of the Hellenic Greek, lent themselves with a curious felicity to the purposes of translation. As a mere literary monument, the English version of the Bible remains the noblest example of the English tongue. Its perpetual use made it from the instant of its appearance the standard of our language. But for the moment its literary effect was less than its social. The power of the book over the mass of Englishmen showed itself in a thousand superficial ways, and in none more conspicuously than in the influence it exerted on ordinary speech. It formed, we must repeat, the whole literature which was practically accessible to ordinary Englishmen; and when we recall the number of common phrases which we owe to great authors, the bits of Shakspere, or Milton, or Dickens, or Thackeray, which unconsciously interweave themselves in our ordinary talk, we shall better understand the strange mosaic of Biblical words and phrases which coloured English talk two hundred years ago. The mass of picturesque allusion and illustration which we borrow from a thousand books, our fathers were forced to borrow from one; and the borrowing was the easier and the more natural that the range of the Hebrew literature fitted it for the expression of every phase of feeling. When Spenser poured forth his warmest love-notes in the "Epithalamion," he adopted the very words of the Psalmist, as he bade the gates open for the entrance of his bride. When Cromwell saw the mists break over the hills of Dunbar, he hailed the sun burst with the cry of David: "Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered. Like as the sun riseth, so shalt thou drive them away!" Even to common minds this familiarity with grand poetic imagery in prophet and apocalypse gave a loftiness and ardour of expression, that with all its tendency to exaggeration and

Digitized by Google

bombast we may prefer to the slipshod vulgarisms of the shopkeeper of to-day.

But far greater than its effect on literature or social phrase was the effect of the Bible on the character of the people at large. Elizabeth might silence or tune the pulpits; but it was impossible for her to silence or tune the great preachers of justice, and mercy, and truth, who spoke from the book which she had again opened for her people. The whole moral effect which is produced now-a-days by the religious newspaper, the tract, the essay, the lecture, the missionary report, the sermon, was then produced by the Bible alone. And its effect in this way, however dispassionately we examine it, was simply amazing. The whole temper of the nation was changed. A new conception of life and of man superseded the old. A new moral and religious impulse spread through every class. Literature reflected the general tendency of the time; and the dumpy little quartos of controversy and piety, which still crowd our older libraries, drove before them the classical translations and Italian novelettes of the age of Elizabeth. "Theology rules there," said Grotius of England, only ten years after the Queen's death; and when Casaubon, the last of the great scholars of the sixteenth century, was invited to England by King James, he found both King and people indifferent to letters. "There is a great abundance of theologians in England," he says to a friend; "all point their studies in that direction." The study of the country gentleman pointed towards theology as much as that of the scholar. As soon as Colonel Hutchinson "had improved his natural understanding with the acquisition of learning, the first studies he exercised himself in were the principles of religion." The whole nation became, in fact, a Church. The great problems of life and death, whose "obstinate questionings" found no answer in the higher minds of Shakspere's day, pressed for an answer from the men who followed him. We must not, indeed, picture the early Puritan as a gloomy fanatic. It was long before the religious movement—which affected the noble and the squire as much as the shopkeeper or the farmer—came into conflict with general culture. With the close of the Elizabethan age, indeed, the intellectual freedom which had marked it faded insensibly away: the bold philosophical speculations which Sydney had caught from Bruno, and which had brought on Marlowe and Raleigh the charge of atheism, died, like her own religious indifference, with the Queen. But the lighter and more elegant sides of the Elizabethan culture harmonized well enough with the temper of the Puritan gentleman. The figure of Colonel Hutchinson, one of the Regicides, stands out from his wife's canvas with the grace and tenderness of a portrait by Vandyck. She dwells on the personal beauty which distinguished his youth, on "his teeth even and white as the purest ivory," "his hair of brown, very thickset in his youth, softer than the finest silk,



Digitized by Google

curling with loose great rings at the ends." Serious as was his temper in graver matters, the young squire was fond of hawking, and piqued himself on his skill in dancing and fence. His artistic taste showed itself in a critical love of "gravings, sculpture, and all liberal arts," as well as in the pleasure he took in his gardens, "in the improvement of his grounds, in planting groves and walks and fruit trees." If he was "diligent in his examination of the Scriptures," "he had a great love for music, and often diverted himself with a viol, on which he played masterly." A taste for music, indeed, seems to have been common in the graver homes of the time. If we pass from Owthorpe and Colonel Hutchinson to the house of a London scrivener in Bread Street, we find Milton's father, precisian and man of business as he was, composing madrigals to Oriana, and rivalling Bird and Gibbons as a writer of sacred song. We miss, indeed, the passion of the Elizabethan time, its caprice, its largeness of feeling and sympathy, its quick pulse of delight; but, on the other hand, life gains in moral grandeur, in a sense of the dignity of manhood, in orderliness and equable force. The temper of the Puritan gentleman was just, noble, and self-controlled. The larger geniality of the age that had passed away shrank into an intense tenderness within the narrower circle of the home. "He was as kind a father," says Mrs. Hutchinson of her husband, "as dear a brother, as good a master, as faithful a friend as the world had." Passion was replaced by a manly purity. "Neither in youth nor riper years could the most fair or enticing woman ever draw him so much as into unnecessary familiarity or dalliance. Wise and virtuous women he loved, and delighted in all pure and holy and unblameable conversation with them, but so as never to excite scandal or temptation. Scurrilous discourse even among men he abhorred; and though he sometimes took pleasure in wit and mirth, yet that which was mixed with impurity he never could endure." The play and wilfulness of life, in which the Elizabethans found its chiefest charm, the Puritan regarded as unworthy of its character and end. His aim was to attain self-command, to be master of himself, of his thought and speech and acts. A certain gravity and reflectiveness gave its tone to the lightest details of his daily converse with the world about him. His temper, quick as it might naturally be, was kept under strict control. In his discourse he was ever on his guard against talkativeness or frivolity, striving to be deliberate in speech and "ranking the words beforehand." His life was orderly and methodical, sparing of diet and of self-indulgence; he rose early, "he never was at any time idle, and hated to see any one else so." The new sobriety and self-restraint marked itself even in his change of dress. The gorgeous colours and jewels of the Renascence disappeared. Colonel Hutchinson "left off very early the wearing of anything that was costly, yet in his plainest negligent habit appeared very much a

Digitized by Google

gentleman." The loss of colour and variety in costume reflected no doubt a certain loss of colour and variety in life itself; but it was a loss compensated by solid gains. Greatest among these, perhaps, was the new conception of social equality. Their common call, their common brotherhood in Christ, annihilated in the mind of the Puritans that overpowering sense of social distinctions which characterized the age of Elizabeth. The meanest peasant felt himself ennobled as a child of God. The proudest noble recognized a spiritual equality in the poorest "saint." The great social revolution of the Civil Wars and the Protectorate was already felt in the demeanour of gentlemen like Hutchinson. "He had a loving and sweet courtesy to the poorest, and would often employ many spare hours with the commonest soldiers and poorest labourers." "He never disdained the meanest nor flattered the greatest." But it was felt even more in the new dignity and self-respect with which the consciousness of their "calling" invested the classes beneath the rank of the gentry. Take such a portrait as that which John Wallington, a turner in Eastcheap, has left us of a London housewife, his mother. "She was very loving," he says, "and obedient to her parents, loving and kind to her husband, very tender-hearted to her children, loving all that were godly, much misliking the wicked and profane. She was a pattern of sobriety unto many, very seldom was seen abroad except at church; when others recreated themselves at holidays and other times, she would take her needle-work and say 'here is my recreation.' . . God had given her a pregnant wit and an excellent memory. She was very ripe and perfect in all stories of the Bible, likewise in all the stories of the Martyrs, and could readily turn to them; she was also perfect and well seen in the English Chronicles, and in the descents of the Kings of England. She lived in holy wedlock with her husband twenty years, wanting but four days."

**John Milton.**

The strength, however, of the Puritan cause lay as yet rather in the middle and professional class, than among the small traders or the gentry; and it is in a Puritan of this class that we find the fullest and noblest expression of the new influence which was leavening the temper of the time. Milton is not only the highest, but the completest type of Puritanism. His life is absolutely contemporary with that of his cause. He was born when it began to exercise a direct power over English politics and English religion; he died when its effort to mould them into its own shape was over, and when it had again sunk into one of many influences to which we owe our English character. His earlier verse, the pamphlets of his riper years, the epics of his age, mark with a singular precision the three great stages in its history. His youth shows us how much of the gaiety, the poetic ease, the intellectual culture of the Renascence lingered in a Puritan home. Scrivener and "precisian" as his father was, he was a skilful musician;

1608.



Digitized by Google

and the boy inherited his father's skill on lute and organ. One of the finest outbursts in the scheme of education which he put forth at a later time is a passage, in which he vindicates the province of music as an agent in moral training. His home, his tutor, his school were all rigidly Puritan; but there was nothing narrow or illiberal in his early training. "My father," he says, "destined me while yet a little boy to the study of humane letters; which I seized with such eagerness that from the twelfth year of my age I scarcely ever went from my lessons to bed before midnight." But to the Greek, Latin, and Hebrew he learnt at school, the scrivener advised him to add Italian and French. Nor were English letters neglected. Spenser gave the earliest turn to his poetic genius. In spite of the war between playwright and precisian, a Puritan youth could still in Milton's days avow his love of the stage, "if Jonson's learned sock be on, or sweetest Shakspere, Fancy's child, warble his native woodnotes wild," and gather from the "masques and antique pageantry" of the court-revel hints for his own Comus and Arcades. Nor does any shadow of the coming struggle with the Church disturb the young scholar's reverie, as he wanders beneath "the high embowed roof, with antique pillars, massy proof, and storied windows richly dight, casting a dim religious light," or as he hears "the pealing organ blow to the full-voiced choir below, in service high and anthem clear." His enjoyment of the gaiety of life stands in bright contrast with the gloom and sternness of the later Puritanism. In spite of "a certain reservedness of natural disposition," which shrank from "festivities and jests, in which I acknowledge my faculty to be very slight," the young singer could still enjoy the "jest and youthful jollity" of the world around him, of its "quips and cranks and wanton wiles;" he could join the crew of Mirth, and look pleasantly on at the village fair, "where the jolly rebecks sound to many a youth and many a maid, dancing in the chequered shade." But his pleasures were unreproved. There was nothing ascetic in his look, in his slender, vigorous frame, his face full of a delicate yet serious beauty, the rich brown hair which clustered over his brow; and the words we have quoted show his sensitive enjoyment of all that was beautiful. But from coarse or sensual self-indulgence the young Puritan turned with disgust: "A certain reservedness of nature, an honest haughtiness and self-esteem, kept me still above those low descents of mind." He drank in an ideal chivalry from Spenser, but his religion and purity disdained the outer pledge on which chivalry built up its fabric of honour. "Every free and gentle spirit," said Milton, "without that oath, ought to be born a knight." It was with this temper that he passed from his London school, St. Paul's, to Christ's College at Cambridge, and it was this temper that he preserved throughout his University career. He left Cambridge, as he said afterwards, "free from all reproach, and approved by all

Digitized by Google

honest men," with a purpose of self-dedication "to that same lot, however mean or high, towards which time leads me, and the will of Heaven."

Even in the still calm beauty of a life such as this, we catch the sterner tones of the Puritan temper. The very height of its aim, the intensity of its moral concentration, brought with them a loss of the genial delight in all that was human which distinguished the men of the Renascence. "If ever God instilled an intense love of moral beauty into the mind of any man," said Milton, "he has instilled it into mine." "Love Virtue," closed his Comus, "she alone is free!" But the love of virtue and of moral beauty, if it gave strength to human conduct, narrowed human sympathy and human intelligence. Already in Milton we note "a certain reservedness of temper," a contempt for "the false estimates of the vulgar," a proud retirement from the meaner and coarser life around him. Great as was his love for Shakspere, we can hardly fancy him delighting in Falstaff. In minds of a less cultured order, this moral tension ended in a hard unsocial sternness of life. The ordinary Puritan, like the housewife of Eastcheap whom we have noticed above, "loved all that were godly, much misliking the wicked and profane." His bond to other men was not the sense of a common manhood, but the recognition of a brotherhood among the elect. Without the pale of the saints lay a world which was hateful to them, because it was the enemy of their God. It was this utter isolation from the "ungodly" that explains the contrast which startles us between the inner tenderness of the Puritans and the ruthlessness of so many of their actions. Cromwell, whose son's death (in his own words) went to his heart "like a dagger, indeed it did!" and who rode away sad and wearied from the triumph of Marston Moor, burst into horse-play as he signed the death-warrant of the King. A temper which had thus lost sympathy with the life of half the world around it could hardly sympathise with the whole of its own life. Humour, the faculty which above all corrects exaggeration and extravagance, died away before the new stress and strain of existence. The absolute devotion of the Puritan to a Supreme Will tended more and more to rob him of all sense of measure and proportion in common matters. Little things became great things in the glare of religious zeal; and the godly man learnt to shrink from a surplice, or a mince-pie at Christmas, as he shrank from impurity or a lie. Life became hard, rigid, colourless, as it became intense. The play, the geniality, the delight of the Elizabethan age were exchanged for a measured sobriety, seriousness, and self-restraint. But it was a self-restraint and sobriety which limited itself wholly to the outer life. In the inner soul of the Puritan, sense, reason, judgment were overborne by the terrible reality of "invisible things." Our first glimpse of Oliver Cromwell is as a young country squire and farmer in the marsh

Digitized by Google

SEC. I. THE PURITANS. 1583-1603.

levels around Huntingdon and St. Ives, buried from time to time in a deep melancholy, and haunted by fancies of coming death. "I live in Meshac," he writes to a friend, "which they say signifies Prolonging; in Kedar, which signifies Darkness; yet the Lord forsaketh me not." The vivid sense of a Divine Purity close to such men made the life of common men seem sin. "You know what my manner of life has been," Cromwell adds. "Oh, I lived in and loved darkness, and hated light. I hated godliness." Yet his worst sin was probably nothing more than an enjoyment of the natural buoyancy of youth, and a want of the deeper earnestness which comes with riper years. In imaginative tempers, like that of Bunyan, the struggle took a more

*b.* 1628.

picturesque form. John Bunyan was the son of a poor tinker at Elstow in Bedfordshire, and even in childhood his fancy revelled in terrible visions of Heaven and Hell. "When I was but a child of nine or ten years old," he tells us, "these things did so distress my soul, that then in the midst of my merry sports and childish vanities, amidst my vain companions, I was often much cast down and afflicted in my mind therewith; yet could I not let go my sins." The sins he could not let go were a love of hockey and of dancing on the village green; for the only real fault which his bitter self-accusation discloses, that of a habit of swearing, was put an end to at once and for ever by a rebuke from an old woman. His passion for bell-ringing clung to him even after he had broken from it as a "vain practice;" and he would go to the steeple house and look on, till the thought that a bell might fall and crush him in his sins drove him panic-stricken from the door. A sermon against dancing and games drew him for a time from these indulgences; but the temptation again overmastered his resolve. "I shook the sermon out of my mind, and to my old custom of sports and gaming I returned with great delight. But the same day, as I was in the midst of a game of cat, and having struck it one blow from the hole, just as I was about to strike it the second time, a voice did suddenly dart from heaven into my soul, which said, 'Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to Heaven, or have thy sins and go to Hell?' At this I was put in an exceeding maze; wherefore, leaving my cat upon the ground, I looked up to heaven; and was as if I had with the eyes of my understanding seen the Lord Jesus looking down upon me, as being very hotly displeased with me, and as if He did severely threaten me with some grievous punishment for those and other ungodly practices."

**The Presbyterians.**

Such was Puritanism, and it is of the highest importance to realize it thus in itself, in its greatness and its littleness, apart from the ecclesiastical system of Presbyterianism with which it is so often confounded. As we shall see in the course of our story, not one of the leading Puritans of the Long Parliament was a Presbyterian. Pym and Hampden had no sort of objection to Episcopacy, and

Digitized by Google

the adoption of the Presbyterian system was only forced on the Puritan patriots in their later struggle by political considerations. But the growth of the movement, which thus influenced our history for a time, forms one of the most curious episodes in Elizabeth's reign. Her Church policy rested on the Acts of Supremacy and of Uniformity; the first of which placed all ecclesiastical jurisdiction and legislative power in the hands of the State, while the second prescribed a course of doctrine and discipline, from which no variation was legally permissible. For the nation at large, the system which was thus adopted was no doubt a wise and a healthy one. Single-handed, and unsupported by any of the statesmen or divines of their time, the Queen and the Primate forced on the warring religions a sort of armed truce. The main principles of the Reformation were accepted, but the zeal of the ultra-reformers was held at bay. The Bible was left open, private discussion was unrestrained, but the warfare of pulpit against pulpit was silenced by the licensing of preachers. An outer conformity, and attendance at public worship, was exacted from all; but the changes in ritual, by which the zealots of Geneva gave prominence to the radical features of the religious change which was passing over the country, were steadily resisted. While England was struggling for existence, this balanced attitude of the Crown reflected faithfully enough the balanced attitude of the nation; but with the death of Mary Stuart the danger was over, and a marked change in public sentiment became at once observable. Unhappily no corresponding change took place in the Queen. With the religious enthusiasm which was growing up around her she had no sympathy whatever. Her passion was for moderation, her aim was simply civil order; and both order and moderation were threatened, as she held, by the knot of clerical bigots who gathered from this hour under the banner of Presbyterianism. Of these Thomas Cartwright was the chief. He had studied at Geneva; he returned with a fanatical faith in Calvinism, and in the system of Church government which Calvin had devised; and as Margaret Professor of Divinity at Cambridge he used to the full the opportunities which his chair gave him of propagating his opinions. No leader of a religious party ever deserved less of after sympathy than Cartwright. He was unquestionably learned and devout, but his bigotry was that of a mediæval inquisitor. The relics of the old ritual, the cross in baptism, the surplice, the giving of a ring in marriage, were to him not merely distasteful, as they were to the Puritans at large, they were idolatrous and the mark of the beast. His declamations against ceremonies and superstition however had little weight with Elizabeth or her Primates; what scared them was his reckless advocacy of a scheme of ecclesiastical government which placed the State beneath the feet of the Church. The absolute rule of bishops, indeed, he denounced as begotten of the devil; but the

Digitized by Google

SEC. I. THE PURITANS. 1583-1603.

absolute rule of Presbyters he held to be established by the word of God. For the Church modelled after the fashion of Geneva he claimed an authority which surpassed the wildest dreams of the masters of the Vatican. All spiritual power and jurisdiction, the decreeing of doctrine, the ordering of ceremonies, lay wholly, according to his Calvinistic creed, in the hands of the ministers of the Church. To them, too, belonged the supervision of public morals. In an ordered arrangement of classes and synods, they were to govern their flocks, to regulate their own order, to decide in matters of faith, to administer "discipline." Their weapon was excommunication, and they were responsible for its use to none but Christ. The province of the civil ruler was simply "to see their decrees executed and to punish the contemners of them," for the spirit of such a system as this naturally excluded all toleration of practice or belief. With the despotism of a Hildebrand, Cartwright combined the cruelty of a Torquemada. Not only was Presbyterianism to be established as the one legal form of Church government, but all other forms, Episcopalian and Separatist, were to be ruthlessly put down. For heresy there was the punishment of death. Never had the doctrine of persecution been urged with such a blind and reckless ferocity. "I deny," wrote Cartwright, "that upon repentance there ought to follow any pardon of death. . . . Heretics ought to be put to death now. If this be bloody and extreme, I am content to be so counted with the Holy Ghost."

**Hooker.**

Opinions such as these might wisely have been left to be refuted by the good sense of the people itself. They found, in fact, a crushing answer in the "Ecclesiastical Polity" of Richard Hooker, a clergyman who had been Master of the Temple, but whose distaste for the controversies of its pulpit drove him from London to a Wiltshire vicarage at Boscombe, which he exchanged at a later time for the parsonage of Bishopsbourne, among the quiet meadows of Kent. The largeness of temper which characterized all the nobler minds of his day, the philosophic breadth which is seen as clearly in Shakspere as in Bacon, was united in Hooker with a grandeur and stateliness of style, which raised him to the highest rank among English prose writers. Divine as he was, his spirit and method were philosophical rather than theological. Against the ecclesiastical dogmatism of Cartwright he set the authority of reason. He abandoned the narrow ground of Scriptural argument to base his conclusions on the general principles of moral and political science, on the eternal obligations of natural law. The Presbyterian system rested on the assumption that an immutable rule for human action, in all matters relating to religion, to worship, and to the discipline and constitution of the Church, was laid down, and only laid down, in Scripture. Hooker urged that a Divine order exists, not in written revelation only, but in the moral

Digitized by Google

relations, and the social and political institutions of men. He claimed for human reason the province of determining the laws of this order; of distinguishing between what is changeable and unchangeable in them, between what is eternal and what is temporary in Scripture itself. It was easy for him to push on to the field of theological controversy which Cartwright had chosen, to show historically that no form of Church government had ever been of indispensable obligation, and that ritual observances had in all ages been left to the discretion of Churches, and determined by the differences of times. But the truth on which he rested his argument against the dogmatism of the Presbyterian is of far higher value than his argument itself; for it is the truth against which ecclesiastical dogmatism, whether of the Presbyterian or the Catholic, must always shatter itself. The "Ecclesiastical Polity" appealed 1594. rather to the broad sense and intelligence of Englishmen than to the learning of divines, but its appeal was hardly needed. Popular as the Presbyterian system became in Scotland, it never took any popular hold on England; it remained to the last a clerical rather than a national creed, and even in the moment of its seeming triumph under the Commonwealth it was rejected by every part of England save London and Lancashire. But the bold challenge to the Government 1572. which was delivered in Cartwright's "Admonition to the Parliament" had raised a panic among English statesmen and prelates which cut off all hopes of a quiet appeal to reason. It is probable that, but for the storm which Cartwright raised, the steady growth of general discontent with the ritualistic usages he denounced would have brought about their abolition. The Parliament of 1571 not only refused to bind the clergy to subscription to three articles on the Supremacy, the form of Church government, and the power of the Church to ordain rites and ceremonies, but favoured the project of reforming the Liturgy by the omission of the superstitious practices. But with the appearance of the "Admonition" this natural progress of opinion abruptly ceased. The moderate statesmen who had pressed for a change in ritual withdrew from union with a party which revived the worst pretensions of the Papacy. Parker's hand pressed heavier than before on nonconforming ministers, while Elizabeth was provoked to a measure which forms the worst blot on her reign.

**The Ecclesiastical Commission.** 1583.

Her establishment of the Ecclesiastical Commission in fact converted the religious truce into a spiritual despotism. From being a temporary board which represented the Royal Supremacy in matters ecclesiastical, the Commission was now turned into a permanent body wielding the almost unlimited powers of the Crown. All opinions or acts contrary to the Statutes of Supremacy and Uniformity fell within its cognizance. A right of deprivation placed the clergy at its mercy. It had power to alter or amend the Statutes of Colleges or Schools. Not only heresy, and schism, and nonconformity, but incest or aggravated adultery were

Digitized by Google

Sec. I. The Puritans. 1583-1603.

held to fall within its scope: its means of enquiry were left without limit, and it might fine or imprison at its will. By the mere establishment of such a Court half the work of the Reformation was undone; but the large number of civilians on the board seemed to furnish some security against the excess of ecclesiastical tyranny. Of its forty-four commissioners however few actually took any part in its proceedings; and the powers of the Commission were practically left in the hands of the successive Primates. No Archbishop of Canterbury since the days of Augustine had wielded an authority so vast, so utterly despotic, as that of Parker and Whitgift and Bancroft and Abbot and Laud. The most terrible feature of their spiritual tyranny was its wholly personal character. The old symbols of doctrine were gone, and the lawyers had not yet stept in to protect the clergy by defining the exact limits of the new. The result was that at the Commission-board at Lambeth the Primates created their own tests of doctrine with an utter indifference to those created by law. In one instance Parker deprived a vicar of his benefice for a denial of the verbal inspiration of the Bible. Nor did the successive Archbishops care greatly if the test was a varying or a conflicting one. Whitgift strove to force on the Church the Calvinistic supralapsarianism of his Lambeth Articles. Bancroft, who followed him, was as earnest in enforcing his anti-Calvinistic dogma of the Divine right of the episcopate. Abbot had no mercy for Erastians. Laud had none for anti-Erastians. It is no wonder that the Ecclesiastical Commission, which these men represented, soon stank in the nostrils of the English clergy. Its establishment however marked the adoption of a distinct policy on the part of the Crown, and its efforts were backed by stern measures of repression. All preaching or reading in private houses was forbidden; and in spite of the refusal of Parliament to enforce the requirement of them by law, subscription to the Three Articles was exacted from every member of the clergy.

The Separatists.

For the moment these measures were crowned with success. The movement under Cartwright was checked; Cartwright himself was driven from his Professorship; and an outer uniformity of worship was more and more brought about by the steady pressure of the Commission. The old liberty which had been allowed in London and the other Protestant parts of the kingdom was no longer permitted to exist. The leading Puritan clergy, whose nonconformity had hitherto been winked at, were called upon to submit to the surplice, and to make the sign of the cross. The remonstrances of the country gentry availed as little as the protest of Lord Burleigh himself to protect two hundred of the best ministers, who were driven from their parsonages on their refusal to subscribe to the Three Articles. But the result of this persecution was simply to give a fresh life and popularity to the doctrines which it aimed at crushing, by drawing together two currents

Digitized by Google

of opinion which were in themselves perfectly distinct. The Presbyterian platform of Church discipline had as yet been embraced by the clergy only, and by few among the clergy. On the other hand, the wish for a reform in the Liturgy, the dislike of "superstitious usages," of the use of the surplice, the sign of the cross in baptism, the gift of the ring in marriage, the posture of kneeling at the Lord's Supper, was shared by a large number of the clergy and laity alike. At the opening of Elizabeth's reign almost all the higher Churchmen but Parker were opposed to them, and a motion for their abolition in Convocation was lost but by a single vote. The temper of the country gentlemen on this subject was indicated by that of Parliament; and it was well known that the wisest of the Queen's Councillors, Burleigh, Walsingham, and Knollys, were at one in this matter with the gentry. If their common persecution did not wholly succeed in fusing these two sections of religious opinion into one, it at any rate gained for the Presbyterians a general sympathy on the part of the Puritans, which raised them from a clerical clique into a popular party. Nor were the consequences of the persecution limited to the strengthening of the Presbyterians. The "Separatists," who were beginning to withdraw from attendance at public worship, on the ground that the very existence of a national Church was contrary to the Word of God, grew quickly from a few scattered zealots to twenty thousand souls. Congregations of these Independents—or, as they were called at this time, from the name of their founder, Brownists—formed rapidly throughout England; and persecution on the part of the Bishops and the Presbyterians, to both of whom their opinions were equally hateful, drove flocks of refugees over sea. So great a future awaited one of these congregations that we may pause to get a glimpse of "a poor people" in Lincolnshire and the neighbourhood, who "being enlightened by the Word of God," and their members "urged with the yoke of subscription," had been led "to see further." They rejected ceremonies as relics of idolatry, the rule of bishops as unscriptural, and joined themselves, "as the Lord's free people," into "a church estate on the fellowship of the Gospel." Choosing John Robinson as their minister, they felt their way forward to the great principle of liberty of conscience; and asserted their Christian right "to walk in all the ways which God had made known or should make known to them." Their meetings or "conventicles" soon drew down the heavy hand of the law, and the little company resolved to seek a refuge in other lands; but their first attempt at flight was prevented, and when they made another, their wives and children were seized at the very moment of entering the ship. At last, however, the magistrates gave a contemptuous assent to their project; they were in fact "glad to be rid of them at any price;" and the fugitives found shelter at Amsterdam. "They knew they were pilgrims and looked not much on these things,

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
THE PURITANS.
1583-1603.

but lifted up their eyes to Heaven, their dearest country, and quieted their spirits." Among this little band of exiles were those who were to become famous at a later time as the Pilgrim Fathers of the *Mayflower*.

**Martin Marprelate.**

It was easy to be "rid" of the Brownists; but the political danger of the course on which the Crown had entered was seen in the rise of a spirit of vigorous opposition, such as had not made its appearance since the accession of the Tudors. The growing power of public opinion received a striking recognition in the struggle which bears the name of the "Martin Marprelate controversy." The Puritans had from the first appealed by their pamphlets from the Crown to the people, and Whitgift bore witness to their influence on opinion
1585. by his efforts to gag the Press. The regulations of the Star-Chamber for this purpose are memorable as the first step in the long struggle of government after government to check the liberty of printing. The irregular censorship which had long existed was now finally organized. Printing was restricted to London and the two Universities, the number of printers reduced, and all candidates for license to print placed under the supervision of the Company of Stationers. Every publication too, great or small, had to receive the approbation
1588. of the Primate or the Bishop of London. The first result of this system of repression was the appearance, in the very year of the Armada, of a series of anonymous pamphlets bearing the significant name of "Martin Marprelate," and issued from a secret press, which found refuge from the Royal pursuivants in the country-houses of the gentry. The press was at last seized; and the suspected authors of these scurrilous libels, Penry, a young Welshman, and a minister named Udall, died, the one in prison, the other on the scaffold. But the virulence and boldness of their language produced a powerful effect, for it was impossible under the system of Elizabeth to "mar" the bishops without attacking the Crown; and a new age of political liberty was felt to be at hand when Martin Marprelate forced the political and ecclesiastical measures of the Government into the arena of public discussion. The suppression, indeed, of these pamphlets was far from damping the courage of the Presbyterians. Cartwright, who had been appointed by Lord Leicester to the mastership of an hospital at Warwick, was bold enough to organize his system of Church discipline among the clergy of that county and of Northamptonshire. The example was widely followed; and the general gatherings of the whole ministerial body of the clergy, and the smaller assemblies for each diocese or shire, which in the Presbyterian scheme bore the name of Synods and Classes, began to be held in many parts of England for the purposes of debate and consultation. The new organization was quickly suppressed indeed, but Cartwright was saved from the banishment which Whitgift demanded by a promise

Digitized by Google

of submission; and the struggle, transferred to the higher sphere of the Parliament, widened into the great contest for liberty under James, and the Civil War under his successor.



## Section II.—The First of the Stuarts. 1604—1623.

[*Authorities.*—Mr. Gardiner's "History of England from the Accession of James I.," continued in his "History of the Spanish Marriages," is invaluable for its fullness and good sense, as well as for the amount of fresh information collected in it. Camden's "Annals of James I.," with the King's own works, are useful as contemporary authorities. Winwood's "Memorials of State" contain the more important documents. Hacket's "Life of Williams" and Harrington's "Nugæ Antiquæ" give us valuable side-light for the general politics of the time. For the last two Parliaments, see "Debates and Proceedings of the House of Commons," Oxford, 1766. Mr. Spedding's "Life and Letters of Lord Bacon," as well as his edition of his Works, are indispensable for a knowledge of the period.]

**The Catholic Reaction.**

To judge fairly the attitude and policy of the English Puritans, that is of three-fourths of the Protestants of England, at this moment, we must cursorily review the fortunes of Protestantism during the reign of Elizabeth. At the Queen's accession, the success of the Reformation seemed almost everywhere secure. Already triumphant in the 1559 north of Germany, the Pacification of Passau was the signal for a beginning of its conquest of the south. The Emperor Maximilian was believed to be wavering in the faith. Throughout Austria and Hungary, the nobles and burghers abandoned Catholicism in a mass. A Venetian ambassador estimated the German Catholics at little more than one-tenth of the whole population of Germany. The Scandinavian kingdoms embraced the new faith, and it mastered at once the eastern and western States of Europe. In Poland the majority of the nobles became Protestants. Scotland flung off Catholicism under Mary, and England veered round again to Protestantism under Elizabeth. At the same moment, the death of Henry the Second opened a way for the rapid diffusion of the new doctrines in France. Only where the dead hand of Spain lay heavy, in Castile, in Arragon, or in Italy, was the Reformation thoroughly crushed out; and even the dead hand of Spain failed to crush heresy in the Low Countries. But at the very instant of its seeming triumph, the advance of the new religion was suddenly arrested. The first twenty years of Elizabeth's reign were a period of suspense. The progress of Protestantism gradually ceased. It wasted its strength in theological controversies and persecutions, above all in the bitter and venomous discussions between the Churches which followed Luther and the Churches which followed Calvin. It was degraded and weakened by the prostitution of the Reformation to political ends, by the greed and worthlessness of the

Digitized by Google

German princes who espoused its cause, by the factious lawlessness of the nobles in Poland, and of the Huguenots in France. Meanwhile the Papacy succeeded in rallying the Catholic world round the Council of Trent. The Roman Church, enfeebled and corrupted by the triumph of ages, felt at last the uses of adversity. Her faith was settled and defined. The most crying among the ecclesiastical abuses which had provoked the movement of the Reformation were sternly put down. The enthusiasm of the Protestants roused a counter enthusiasm among their opponents; new religious orders rose to meet the wants of the day; the Capuchins became the preachers of Catholicism, the Jesuits became not only its preachers, but its directors, its schoolmasters, its missionaries, its diplomatists. Their organization, their blind obedience, their real ability, their fanatical zeal galvanized the pulpit, the school, the confessional into a new life. If the Protestants had enjoyed the profitable monopoly of martyrdom at the opening of the century, the Catholics won a fair share of it as soon as the disciples of Loyola came to the front. The tracts which pictured the tortures of Campion and Southwell roused much the same fire at Toledo or Vienna as the pages of Foxe had roused in England. Even learning passed gradually over to the side of the older faith. Bellarmine, the greatest of controversialists at this time, Baronius, the most erudite of Church historians, were both Catholics. With a growing inequality of strength such as this, we can hardly wonder that the tide was seen at last to turn. A few years before the fight with the Armada Catholicism began definitely to win ground. Southern Germany, where the Austrian House, so long lukewarm in its faith, had at last become zealots in its defence, was the first
1580 country to be re-Catholicised. The success of Socinianism in Poland severed that kingdom from any real communion with the general body of the Protestant Churches; and these again were more and more divided into two warring camps by the controversies about the Sacrament and Free Will. Everywhere the Jesuits won converts, and their peaceful victories were soon backed by the arm of Spain. In the fierce struggle which followed, Philip was undoubtedly worsted. England was saved by its defeat of the Armada; the United Provinces of the Netherlands rose into a great Protestant power through their own dogged heroism and the genius of William the Silent. France was rescued, at the moment when all hope seemed gone, by the unconquerable energy of Henry of Navarre. But even in its defeat Catholicism gained ground. In the Low Countries, the Reformation was driven from the Walloon provinces, from Brabant, and from Flanders. In France, Henry the Fourth found himself obliged to purchase Paris by a mass; and the conversion of the King was followed by a quiet dissolution of the Huguenot party. Nobles and scholars alike forsook Protestantism; and though the Reformation

Digitized by Google

remained dominant south of the Loire, it lost all hope of winning the country as a whole to its side.

At the death of Elizabeth, therefore, the temper of every Protestant, whether in England or abroad, was that of a man who, after cherishing the hope of a crowning victory, is forced to look on at a crushing and irremediable defeat. The dream of a reformation of the universal Church was utterly at an end. The borders of Protestantism were narrowing every day, nor was there a sign that the triumph of the Papacy was arrested. The accession of James indeed raised the hopes of the Catholics in England itself; he had intrigued for their support before the Queen's death, and their persecution was relaxed for a while after he had mounted the throne. But it soon began again with even greater severity than of old, and six thousand Catholics were presented as recusants in a single year. Hopeless of aid from abroad, or of success in an open rising at home, a small knot of desperate men, with Robert Catesby, who had been engaged in the plot of Essex, at their head, resolved to destroy at a blow both King and Parliament. Barrels of powder were placed in a cellar beneath the Parliament House; and while waiting for the fifth of November, when the Parliament was summoned to meet, the plans of the little group widened into a formidable conspiracy. Catholics of greater fortune, such as Sir Edward Digby and Francis Tresham, were admitted to their confidence, and supplied money for the larger projects they designed. Arms were bought in Flanders, horses were held in readiness, a meeting of Catholic gentlemen was brought about under show of a hunting party to serve as the beginning of a rising. The destruction of the King was to be followed by the seizure of the King's children and an open revolt, in which aid might be called for from the Spaniards in Flanders. **The Gunpowder Plot.**

Wonderful as was the secrecy with which the plot was concealed, the cowardice of Tresham at the last moment gave a clue to it by a letter to Lord Monteagle, his relative, which warned him to absent himself from the Parliament on the fatal day; and further information brought about the discovery of the cellar and of Guido Fawkes, a soldier of fortune, who was charged with the custody of it. The hunting party broke up in despair, the conspirators were chased from county to county, and either killed or sent to the block, and Garnet, the Provincial of the English Jesuits, was brought to solemn trial. He had shrunk from all part in the plot, but its existence had been made known to him by another Jesuit, Greenway, and horror-stricken as he represented himself to have been he had kept the secret and left the Parliament to its doom. We can hardly wonder that a frenzy of horror and dread filled the minds of English Protestants at such a discovery. What intensified the dread was a sense of defection and uncertainty within the pale of the Church of England itself. No men could be more opposed in their tendencies to one another than the High Churchmen, such

1604.

Digitized by Google

as Laud, and the English Latitudinarian, such as Hales. But to the ordinary English Protestant both Latitudinarian and High Churchmen were equally hateful. To him the struggle with the Papacy was not one for compromise or comprehension. It was a struggle between light and darkness, between life and death. Every Protestant doctrine, from the least to the greatest, was equally true, and equally sacred. No innovation in faith or worship was of small account, if it tended in the direction of Rome. Ceremonies, which in an hour of triumph might have been allowed as solaces to weak brethren, became insufferable when they were turned by weak brethren into a means of drawing nearer to the enemy in the hour of defeat. The peril was too close at hand to allow of compromises. Now that falsehood was gaining ground, the only security for truth was to draw a hard and fast line between truth and falsehood.

1603. It is a temper such as this that we trace in the Millenary Petition (as it was called), which was presented to James the First on his accession by nearly eight hundred clergymen, a tenth of the whole number in his realm. Its tone was not Presbyterian, but strictly Puritan. It asked for no change in the government or organization of the Church, but for a reform in the Church courts, the provision and training of godly ministers, and the suppression of "Popish usages" in the Book of Common Prayer. Even those who were most opposed to the Presbyterian scheme agreed as to the necessity of some concession on points of this sort. "Why," asked Bacon, "should the civil state be purged and restored by good and wholesome laws made every three years in Parliament assembled, devising remedies as fast as time breedeth mischief; and contrariwise the ecclesiastical state still continue upon the dregs of time, and receive no alteration these forty-five years or more." A general expectation, in fact, prevailed that, now the Queen's opposition was removed, something would be done. But, different as his theological temper was from the purely secular temper of Elizabeth, her successor was equally resolute against all changes in Church matters.

**The Divine Right of Kings.**

No sovereign could have jarred against the conception of an English ruler which had grown up under the Tudors more utterly than James the First. His big head, his slobbering tongue, his quilted clothes, his rickety legs, his goggle eyes, stood out in as grotesque a contrast with all that men recalled of Henry or Elizabeth as his gabble and rodomontade, his want of personal dignity, his coarse buffoonery, his drunkenness, his pedantry, his contemptible cowardice. Under this ridiculous exterior however lay a man of much natural ability, a ripe scholar, with a considerable fund of shrewdness, of mother wit, and ready repartee. His canny humour lights up the political and theological controversies of the time with quaint incisive phrases, with puns and epigrams and touches of irony, which still retain their savour. His

Digitized by Google

reading, especially in theological matters, was extensive ; and he was a voluminous author on subjects which ranged from Predestinarianism to tobacco. But his shrewdness and learning only left him, in the phrase of Henry the Fourth, "the wisest fool in Christendom." He had the temper of a pedant ; and with it a pedant's love of theories, and a pedant's inability to bring his theories into any relation with actual facts. All might have gone well had he confined himself to speculations about witchcraft, about predestination, about the noxiousness of smoking. Unhappily for England and for his successor, he clung yet more passionately to two theories which contained within them the seeds of a death-struggle between his people and the Crown. The first was that of a Divine right of Kings. Even before his accession to the English throne, he had formulated the theory of an absolute royalty in his work on "The True Law of Free Monarchy ;" and announced that, "although a good King will frame his actions to be according to law, yet he is not bound thereto, but of his own will and for example-giving to his subjects." The notion was a wholly new one ; and like most of James's notions was founded simply on a blunder, or at the best on a play upon words. "An absolute King," or "an absolute monarchy," meant, with the Tudor statesmen who used the phrase, a sovereign or rule complete in themselves, and independent of all foreign or Papal interference. James chose to regard the words as implying the monarch's freedom from all control by law, or from responsibility to anything but his own royal will. The King's blunder however became a system of government, a doctrine which bishops preached from the pulpit, and for which brave men laid their heads on the block. 1606. The Church was quick to adopt its sovereign's discovery. Convocation in its book of Canons denounced as a fatal error the assertion that "all civil power, jurisdiction, and authority were first derived from the people and disordered multitude, or either is originally still in them, or else is deduced by their consent naturally from them, and is not God's ordinance originally descending from Him and depending upon Him." In strict accordance with James's theory, these doctors declared sovereignty in its origin to be the prerogative of birthright, and inculcated passive obedience to the monarch as a religious obligation. Cowell, a civilian, followed up the discoveries of Convocation by an announcement that "the King is above the law by his absolute power," and that "notwithstanding his oath he may alter and suspend any particular law that seemeth hurtful to the public estate." The book was suppressed on the remonstrance of the House of Commons, but the party of passive obedience grew fast. A few years before the King's death, the University of Oxford decreed solemnly that "it was in no case lawful for subjects to make use of force against their princes, or to appear offensively or defensively in the field against them." The King's "arrogant speeches," if they roused resentment in the



Digitized by Google

Parliaments to which they were addressed, created by sheer force of repetition a certain belief in the arbitrary right they challenged for the Crown. We may give one instance of their tone from a speech delivered in the Star-Chamber. "As it is atheism and blasphemy to dispute what God can do," said James, "so it is presumption and a high contempt in a subject to dispute what a King can do, or to say that a King cannot do this or that." A few years after his accession his words had startled English ears with a sense of coming danger to the national liberty. "If the practice should follow the positions," was the comment of a thoughtful observer, "we are not likely to leave to our successors that freedom we received from our forefathers."

**The Divine Right of Bishops.**

It is necessary to weigh, throughout the course of James's reign, this aggressive attitude of the Crown, if we would rightly judge what seems at first sight to be an aggressive tone in some of the proceedings of the Parliaments. With new claims of power such as these before them, to have stood still would have been ruin. The claim, too, was one which jarred against all that was noblest in the Puritan tone of the time. The temper of the Puritan was eminently a temper of law. The diligence with which he searched the Scriptures sprang from his earnestness to discover a Divine Will which in all things, great or small, he might implicitly obey. But this implicit obedience was reserved for the Divine Will alone; for human ordinances derived their strength only from their correspondence with the revealed law of God. The Puritan was bound by his very religion to examine every claim made on his civil and spiritual obedience by the powers that be; and to own or reject the claim, as it accorded with the higher duty which he owed to God. "In matters of faith," Mrs. Hutchinson tells us of her husband, "his reason always submitted to the Word of God; but in all other things the greatest names in the world would not lead him without reason." It was plain that an impassable gulf parted such a temper as this from the temper of unquestioning devotion to the Crown which James demanded. It was a temper not only legal, but even pedantic in its legality, intolerant from its very sense of a moral order and law of the lawlessness and disorder of a personal tyranny; a temper of criticism, of judgment, and, if need be, of stubborn and unconquerable resistance; of a resistance which sprang, not from the disdain of authority, but from the Puritan's devotion to an authority higher than that of Kings. But if the theory of a Divine right of Kings was certain to rouse against it all the nobler energies of Puritanism, there was something which roused its nobler and its pettier instincts of resistance, alike in James's second theory of a Divine right of Bishops. Elizabeth's conception of her Ecclesiastical Supremacy had been a sore stumbling-block to her subjects, but Elizabeth at least regarded the Supremacy simply as a branch of her ordinary prerogative. Not only were the clergy her subjects, but they

Digitized by Google

were more her subjects than the laity. She treated them in fact as her predecessors had treated the Jews. If she allowed nobody else to abuse or to rob them, she robbed and abused them herself to her heart's content. But the theory which James held as to Church and State was as different from that of Elizabeth, as the theological bent of his mind was different from her secular temper. His patristic reading had left behind it the belief in a Divine right of Bishops, as sacred and as absolute as the Divine right of Kings. Unbroken episcopal succession and hereditary regal succession were with the new sovereign the inviolable bases of Church and State. The two systems confirmed and supported each other. "No bishop, no King," ran the famous formula which embodied the King's theory. But behind his intellectual convictions lay a host of prejudices derived from his youth. The Scotch Presbyters had insulted and frightened him in the early days of his reign, and he chose to confound Puritanism with Presbyterianism. No prejudice however was really required to suggest his course. In itself it was logical, and consistent with the premisses from which it started. The very ceremonies which the Puritans denounced were ceremonies which had plenty of authority in the writings of the Fathers. That they were offensive to consciences seemed to the King no reason whatever for suppressing them. It was for the Christian to submit, as it was for the subject to submit, and to leave these high matters to bishops and princes for decision. If James accepted the Millenarian Petition, and summoned a conference of prelates and Puritan divines at Hampton Court, it was not for any real discussion of the grievances alleged, but for the display of his own theological learning. The bishops had the wit to declare that the insults he showered on their opponents were dictated by the Holy Ghost. The Puritans still ventured to dispute his infallibility. James broke up the conference with a threat which revealed the policy of the Crown. "I will make them conform," he said of the remonstrants, "or I will harry them out of the land."

**The Crown and the Parliament.**

It is only by thoroughly realizing the temper of the nation on religious and civil subjects, and the temper of the King, that we can understand the long Parliamentary conflict which occupied the whole of James's reign. But to make its details intelligible we must briefly review the relations which existed at his accession between the two Houses and the Crown. In an earlier part of this work we have noted the contrast between Wolsey and Cromwell in their dealings with the Parliament. The wary prescience of the first had seen in it, even in its degradation under the Tudors, the memorial of an older freedom, and a centre of national resistance to the new despotism which Henry was establishing, should the nation ever rouse itself to resist. Never perhaps was English liberty in such deadly peril as when Wolsey resolved on the practical



Digitized by Google

suppression of the two Houses. But the bolder genius of Cromwell set contemptuously aside the apprehensions of his predecessor. His confidence in the power of the Crown revived the Parliament as an easy and manageable instrument of tyranny. The old forms of constitutional freedom were turned to the profit of the Royal despotism, and a revolution which for the moment left England absolutely at Henry's feet was wrought out by a series of Parliamentary Statutes. Throughout Henry's reign Cromwell's confidence seemed justified by the spirit of slavish submission which pervaded the Houses. On only one occasion did the Commons refuse to pass a bill brought forward by the Crown. But the effect of the great religious change for which Cromwell's measures made room began to be felt during the minority of Edward the Sixth; and the debates and divisions on the religious reaction which Mary pressed on the Parliament were many and violent. A great step forward was marked by the effort of the Crown to neutralize by "management" an opposition which it could no longer overawe. An unscrupulous use of the Royal prerogative packed the Parliament with nominees of the Crown. Twenty-two new boroughs were created under Edward, fourteen under Mary; some, indeed, places entitled to representation by their wealth and population, but the bulk of them small towns or hamlets which lay wholly at the disposal of the Royal Council. But the increasing pressure of the two Houses was seen in the further step on which Edward's Council ventured in issuing a circular to the Sheriffs, in which they were ordered to set all freedom of election aside. Where the Council recommended "men of learning and wisdom," in other words men compliant with its will, there its directions were to be "regarded and well followed." Elizabeth, though with greater caution, adopted the system of her two predecessors, both in the creation of boroughs and the recommendation of candidates; but her keen political instinct soon perceived the uselessness of both expedients. She fell back as far as she could on Wolsey's policy of practical abolition, and summoned Parliaments at longer and longer intervals. By rigid economy, by a policy of balance and peace, she strove, and for a long time successfully strove, to avoid the necessity of assembling them at all. But Mary of Scotland and Philip of Spain proved friends to English liberty in its sorest need. The death-struggle with Catholicism forced Elizabeth to have recourse to her Parliament, and as she was driven to appeal for increasing supplies the tone of the Parliament rose higher and higher. On the question of taxation or monopolies her fierce spirit was forced to give way to its demands. On the question of religion she refused all concession, and England was driven to await a change of system from her successor. But it is clear, from the earlier acts of his reign, that James had long before his accession been preparing for a struggle with the Houses, rather

Digitized by Google

than for a policy of concession. During the Queen's reign, the power of Parliament had sprung mainly from the continuance of the war, and from the necessity under which the Crown lay of appealing to it for supplies. It is fair to the war party in Elizabeth's Council to remember that they were fighting, not merely for Protestantism abroad, but for constitutional liberty at home. When Essex overrode Burleigh's counsels of peace, the old minister pointed to the words of the Bible, "a bloodthirsty man shall not live out half his days." But Essex and his friends had nobler motives for their policy of war than a thirst for blood; as James had meaner motives for his policy of peace than a hatred of bloodshedding. The peace which he hastened to conclude with Spain was intended to free the Crown from its dependence on the Parliament; and had he fallen back after the close of the war on Elizabeth's policy of economy, he might yet have succeeded in his aim. But the debt left by the war was only swollen by his profligate extravagance; and peace was hardly concluded when he was forced to appeal once more to his Parliament for supplies.

1604.

**James and the Parliament.**

The Parliament of 1604 met in another mood from that of any Parliament which had met for a hundred years. Short as had been the time since his accession, the temper of the King had already disclosed itself; and men were dwelling ominously on the claims of absolutism in Church and State which were constantly on the Royal lips. Above all, the hopes of religious concessions to which the Puritans had clung had been dashed to the ground in the Hampton Court Conference; and of the squires and burgesses who made up the new House of Commons three-fourths were in sympathy Puritan. The energy which marked their action from the beginning shows that the insults which James had heaped on the Puritan divines had stirred the temper of the nation at large. The first step of the Commons was to name a committee to frame bills for the redress of the more crying ecclesiastical grievances; and the rejection of the measures they proposed was at once followed by an outspoken address to the King. The Parliament, it said, had come together in a spirit of peace; "Our desire was of peace only, and our device of unity." Their aim had been to extinguish the long-standing dissension among the ministers, and to preserve uniformity by the abandonment of "a few ceremonies of small importance," by the redress of some ecclesiastical abuses, and by the establishment of an efficient training for a preaching clergy. If they had waived their right to deal with these matters during the old age of Elizabeth, they asserted it now. "Let your Majesty be pleased to receive public information from your Commons in Parliament, as well of the abuses in the Church, as in the Civil State and Government." The claim of absolutism was met in words which sound like a prelude to the Petition of Right. "Your Majesty would be misinformed," said their address, "if any man should deliver that the

Digitized by Google

SEC. II. THE FIRST OF THE STUARTS. 1604–1623.

Kings of England have any absolute power in themselves either to alter religion, or to make any laws concerning the same, otherwise than as in temporal causes, by consent of Parliament." The address was met by a petulant scolding from James; and the bishops, secure of the support of the Crown, replied by an act of bold defiance. The Canons enacted in the Convocation of 1604 bound the clergy to subscribe to the Three Articles, which Parliament had long before refused to render obligatory on them; and compelled all curates and lecturers to conform strictly to the rubrics of the prayer-book on pain of deprivation. In the following winter, three hundred of the Puritan clergy were driven from their livings for non-compliance with these requirements. The only help came from an unlooked-for quarter. The jealousy which had always prevailed between the civil and ecclesiastical courts united with the general resentment of the country at these ecclesiastical usurpations to spur the Judges to an attack on the High Commission. By a series of decisions on appeal they limited its boundless jurisdiction, and restricted its powers of imprisonment to cases of schism and heresy. But the Judges were of little avail against the Crown; and James was resolute in his support of the bishops. Fortunately his prodigality had already in a few years of peace doubled the debt which Elizabeth had left after fifteen years of war; and the course of illegal taxation on which he entered was far from supplying the deficit of the Exchequer. His first great constitutional innovation was the imposition of Customs duties on almost all kinds of merchandise, imported or exported. The imposition was not, indeed, without precedent. A duty on imports which had been introduced in one or two instances under Mary had been extended by Elizabeth to clothes and wine; but the impost, trivial in itself, had been pushed no farther, nor had it ever been claimed or regarded as more than an exceptional measure of finance. Had Elizabeth cared to extend it, her course would probably have been gradual and tentative, and have aimed at escaping public observation. But James was a fanatical believer in the rights and power of his crown, and he cared quite as much to assert his absolute authority over taxation as to fill his Treasury. A case therefore was brought before the Exchequer Chamber, and the judgment of the Court asserted the King's right to levy what Customs duties he would at his pleasure. "All customs," said the Judges, "are the effects of foreign commerce, but all affairs of commerce and treaties with foreign nations belong to the King's absolute power. He therefore, who has power over the cause, must have power over the effect." The importance of a decision which freed the Crown from the necessity of resorting to Parliament was seen keenly enough by James. English commerce was growing fast, and English merchants were fighting their way to the Spice Islands, and establishing settlements in the dominions

1608.

Digitized by Google

of the Mogul. The judgment gave him a revenue which was sure to grow rapidly, and he acted on it with decision. A Royal proclamation imposed a system of Customs duties on all articles of export and import. But if the new duties came in fast, the Royal debt grew faster. The peace expenditure of James exceeded the war expenditure of Elizabeth, and necessity forced on the King a fresh assembling of Parliament. He forbade the Commons to enter on the subject of the new duties, but their remonstrance was none the less vigorous. "Finding that your Majesty without advice or counsel of Parliament hath lately in time of peace set both greater impositions and more in number than any of your noble ancestors did ever in time of war," they prayed "that all impositions set without the assent of Parliament may be quite abolished and taken away," and that "a law be made to declare that all impositions set upon your people, their goods or merchandise, save only by common consent in Parliament, are and shall be void." From the new question of illegal taxation they turned, with no less earnestness, to the older question of ecclesiastical reform. Before granting the supply which the Crown required, they demanded that the jurisdiction of the High Commission should be regulated by Statute, in other words that ecclesiastical matters should be recognized as within the cognizance of Parliament; and that the deprived ministers should again be suffered to preach. Whatever concessions James might offer on the subject of the Customs, he would allow no interference with his ecclesiastical prerogative; the Parliament was dissolved, and four years passed before the financial straits of the Government forced James to face the two Houses again. But the spirit of resistance was now fairly roused. Never had an election stirred so much popular passion as that of 1614. In every case where rejection was possible, the Court candidates were rejected. All the leading members of the Country party, or as we should call it now the Opposition, were again returned. But three hundred of the members were wholly new men; and among these we note for the first time the names of the great leaders in the later struggle with the Crown. Somersetshire returned John Pym; Yorkshire, Thomas Wentworth; St. Germain's, John Eliot. Signs of an unprecedented excitement were seen in the vehement cheering and hissing which for the first time marked the proceedings of the Commons. But the policy of the Parliament was precisely the same as that of its predecessors. The Commons refused to grant supplies till grievances had been redressed, and fixed on that of illegal taxation as the first to be amended. Unluckily the inexperience of the bulk of the members led them into quarrelling on a point of privilege with the Lords; and the King, who had been frightened beyond his wont at the vehemence of their tone and language, seized on the quarrel as a pretext for their dissolution.

1610.

1614.

Digitized by Google

SEC. II.
THE FIRST OF THE STUARTS.
1604-1623.

**The Royal Despotism.**
1614-21.

Four of the leading members in the dissolved Parliament were sent to the Tower; and the terror and resentment which it had roused in the King's mind were seen in the obstinacy with which he long persisted in governing without any Parliament at all. For seven years he carried out with a blind recklessness his theory of an absolute rule, unfettered by any scruples as to the past, or any dread of the future. All the abuses which Parliament after Parliament had denounced were not only continued, but developed in a spirit of defiance. The Ecclesiastical Commission was hounded on to a fresh persecution. James had admitted the illegality of Royal proclamations, but he issued them now in greater numbers than ever. The refusal of supplies was met by persistence in the levy of Customs; and, when this proved insufficient to meet the wants of the Treasury, by falling back on a resource, which even Wolsey in the height of the Tudor power had been forced to abandon. But the letters from the Royal Council demanding benevolences or loans from every landowner remained generally unanswered. In the three years which followed the dissolution of 1614 the strenuous efforts of the Sheriffs only raised sixty thousand pounds, a sum less than two-thirds of the value of a single subsidy; and although the remonstrances of the western counties were roughly silenced by the threats of the Council, two counties, those of Hereford and Stafford, sent not a penny to the last. In his distress for money James was driven to expedients which widened the breach between the gentry and the Crown. He had refused to part with the feudal privileges which had come down to him from the Middle Ages, such as his right to the wardship of young heirs and the marriage of heiresses, and these were now recklessly used as a means of fiscal extortion. He degraded the nobility by a shameless sale of peerages. Of the ninety lay peers whom he left in the Upper House at his death, nearly one-half had been created by sheer bargaining during his reign. By shifts such as these James put off from day to day the necessity for again encountering the one body which could permanently arrest his effort after despotic rule. But there still remained a body whose tradition was strong enough, not indeed to arrest, but to check it. The lawyers had been subservient beyond all other classes to the Crown. In the narrow pedantry with which they bent before precedents, without admitting any distinction between precedents drawn from a time of freedom and precedents drawn from the worst times of tyranny, the Judges had supported James in his claims to impose Customs duties, and even to levy benevolences. But beyond precedents even the Judges refused to go. They had done their best, when the case came before them, to restrict the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts within legal and definite bounds: and when James asserted an inherent right in the King to be consulted as to the decision, whenever any case affecting the prerogative came before his courts, they timidly, but

Digitized by Google

firmly, repudiated such a right as unknown to the law. James sent for them to the Royal closet, and rated them like schoolboys, till they fell on their knees, and, with a single exception, pledged themselves to obey his will. The Chief-Justice, Sir Edward Coke, a narrow-minded and bitter-tempered man, but of the highest eminence as a lawyer, and with a reverence for the law that overrode every other instinct, alone remained firm. When any case came before him, he answered, he would act as it became a judge to act. The provision which then made the judicial office tenable at the King's pleasure, but which had long been forgotten, was revived to humble the law in the person of its chief officer; and Coke, who had at once been dismissed from the Council, was on the continuance of his resistance deprived of his post of Chief-Justice. No act of James seems to have stirred a deeper horror and resentment among Englishmen than this announcement of his will to tamper with the course of justice. It was an outrage on the growing sense of law, as the profusion and profligacy of the Court were an outrage on the growing sense of morality. The Treasury was drained to furnish masques and revels on a scale of unexampled splendour. Lands and jewels were lavished on young adventurers, whose fair faces caught the Royal fancy. The Court of Elizabeth had been as immoral as that of her successor, but its immorality had been shrouded by a veil of grace and chivalry. But no veil hid the degrading grossness of the Court of James. The King was known to be an habitual drunkard, and suspected of vices compared with which drunkenness was almost a virtue. Ladies of high rank copied the Royal manners, and rolled intoxicated in open Court at the King's feet. A scandalous trial showed great nobles and officers of state in league with cheats and astrologers and poisoners. James himself meddled with justice to obtain a shameful divorce for Lady Essex, the most profligate woman of her time; and her subsequent bridal with one of his favourites was celebrated in his presence. Before scenes such as these, the half-idolatrous reverence with which the sovereign had been regarded throughout the period of the Tudors died away into abhorrence and contempt. The players openly mocked at the King on the stage. Mrs. Hutchinson denounces the orgies of Whitehall in words as fiery as those with which Elijah denounced the sensuality of Jezebel. But the immorality of James's Court was hardly more despicable than the imbecility of his government. In the silence of Parliament, the Royal Council, composed as it was not merely of the ministers, but of the higher nobles and great officers of state, had served even under a despot like Henry the Eighth as a check upon the purely arbitrary authority of the Crown. But after the death of Lord Burleigh's son, Robert Cecil, the minister whom Elizabeth had bequeathed to him, and whose services in procuring his accession were rewarded by the Earldom of Salisbury, all real control over affairs

Digitized by Google

SEC. II. THE FIRST OF THE STUARTS. 1604-1623.

was withdrawn by James from the Council, and entrusted to worthless favourites whom the King chose to raise to honour. A Scotch page named Carr was created Earl of Rochester, married after her divorce to Lady Essex, and only hurled from favour and power by the discovery of a horrible crime, the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury by poison, of which he and his Countess were convicted of being the instigators. But the shame of one favourite only hurried James into the choice of another; and George Villiers, a handsome young adventurer, was raised rapidly through every rank of the peerage, made Marquis and Duke of Buckingham, and entrusted with the direction of English policy. The payment of bribes to him, or marriage with his greedy relatives, soon became the only road to political preferment. Resistance to his will was inevitably followed by dismissal from office. Even the highest and most powerful of the nobility were made to tremble at the nod of this young upstart. "Never any man in any age, nor, I believe, in any country," says the astonished Clarendon, "rose in so short a time to so much greatness of honour, power, or fortune, upon no other advantage or recommendation than of the beauty or gracefulness of his person." But the selfishness and recklessness of Buckingham were equal to his beauty; and the haughty young favourite on whose neck James loved to loll, and whose cheek he slobbered with kisses, was destined to drag down in his fatal career the throne of the Stuarts.

**The Spanish Policy.**

The new system was even more disastrous in its results abroad than at home. The withdrawal of power from the Council left James in effect his own prime minister, and master of the control of affairs as no English sovereign had been before him. At his accession he found the direction of foreign affairs in the hands of Cecil, and so long as Cecil lived the Elizabethan policy was in the main adhered to. Peace, indeed, was made with Spain; but a close alliance with the United Provinces, and a close friendship with France, held the ambition of Spain as effectually in check as war. No sooner did signs of danger appear in Germany from the bigotry of the House of Austria, than the marriage of the King's daughter, Elizabeth, with the Elector-Palatine promised English support to its Protestant powers. It was, indeed, mainly to the firm direction of English policy during Cecil's ministry that the preservation of peace throughout Europe was due. But the death of Cecil, and the dissolution of the Parliament of 1614, were quickly followed by a disastrous change. James at once proceeded to undo all that the struggle of Elizabeth and the triumph of the Armada had done. He withdrew gradually from the close connexion with France. He began a series of negotiations for the marriage of his son with a Princess of Spain. Each of his successive favourites supported the Spanish alliance; and after years of secret intrigue the King's intentions were proclaimed to the world, at the moment when

1617

Digitized by Google

the religious truce which had so long preserved the peace of Germany was broken by the revolt of Bohemia against the Austrian Archduke Ferdinand, who claimed its crown, and by its election of the Elector-Palatine to the vacant throne. From whatever quarter the first aggression had come, it was plain that a second great struggle in arms between Protestantism and Catholicism was now to be fought out on German soil. It was their prescience of the coming conflict, and of the pitiful part which James would play in it, which, on the very eve of the crisis, spurred the Protestant party among his ministers to support an enterprise which promised to detach the King from his new policy by entangling him in a war with Spain. Sir Walter Raleigh, the one great name of the Elizabethan time that still lingered on, had been imprisoned ever since the beginning of the new reign in the Tower on a charge of treason. He now offered to sail to the Orinoco, and discover a gold mine which he believed to exist on its banks. Guiana was Spanish ground; and the appeal to the King's cupidity was backed by the Protestant party with the purpose of bringing on, through Raleigh's settlement there, a contest with Spain. But though he yielded to the popular feeling in suffering Raleigh to sail, James had given previous warning of the voyage to his new ally; and the expedition had hardly landed, when it was driven back with loss from the coast. Raleigh's attempt to seize the Spanish treasure-ships on his return, with the same aim of provoking a war, was defeated by a mutiny among his crews; and the death of the broken-hearted adventurer on the scaffold atoned for the affront to Spain. But the failure of Raleigh's efforts to anticipate the crisis quickened the anxiety of the people at large when the crisis arrived. The German Protestants were divided by the fatal jealousy between their Lutheran and Calvinist princes; but it was believed that England could unite them, and it was on England's support that the Bohemians counted when they chose James's son-in-law for their king. A firm policy would at any rate have held Spain inactive, and limited the contest to Germany itself. But the "statecraft" on which James prided himself led him to count, not on Spanish fear, but on Spanish friendship. He refused aid to the Protestant union of the German Princes when they espoused the cause of Bohemia, and threatened war against Holland, the one power which was earnest in the Palatine's cause. It was in vain that both Court and people were unanimous in their cry for war; that Archbishop Abbot from his sick-bed implored the King to strike one blow for Protestantism; that Spain openly took part with the Catholic League, which had now been formed under the Elector of Bavaria, and marched an army upon the Rhine. James still pressed his son-in-law to withdraw from Bohemia, and counted on his influence with Spain to induce its armies to retire when once the Bohemian struggle was over. But a battle before the walls of Prague, which crushed the

1619.

Digitized by Google

SEC. II.
THE FIRST OF THE STUARTS.
1604-1623.
1620.

Bohemian revolt, drove Frederick back on the Rhine, to find the Spaniards encamped as its masters in the heart of the Palatinate. James had been duped, and for the moment he bent before the burst of popular fury which the danger to German Protestantism called up. A national subscription for the defence of the Palatinate enabled its Elector to raise an army; and his army was joined by a force of English volunteers under Sir Horace Vere. The cry for a Parliament, the necessary prelude to a war, overpowered the King's secret resistance, and the warlike speech with which he opened its session roused an enthusiasm which recalled the days of Elizabeth.

**The Parliament of 1621.**

The Commons answered the King's appeal by a unanimous vote—"lifting their hats as high as they could hold them"—that for the recovery of the Palatinate they would adventure their fortunes, their estates, and their lives. "Rather this declaration," cried a leader of the Country party when it was read by the Speaker, "than ten thousand men already on the march!" But it met with no corresponding pledge or announcement of policy from James; on the contrary, he gave license for the export of arms to Spain. As yet constitutional grievances had been passed by, but the Royal defiance roused the Commons to revive a Parliamentary right which had slept ever since the reign of Edward the Third, the right of the Lower House to impeach great offenders at the bar of the Lords. The new weapon was put to a summary use. The most crying constitutional grievance sprang from the revival of monopolies, after the pledge of Elizabeth to suppress them; and the impeachment of a host of monopolists again put an end to this attempt to raise a revenue for the Crown without a grant from Parliament. But the blow at the corruption of the Court which followed was of a far more serious order. Not only was the Chancellor, Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam, and Earl of St. Albans, the most distinguished man of his time for learning and ability, but his high position as an officer of the Crown made his impeachment for bribery a direct claim on the Parliament's part to supervise the Royal administration. James was too shrewd to mistake the importance of the step; but the hostility of Buckingham to the Chancellor, and Bacon's own confession of his guilt, made it difficult to resist his condemnation. Energetic too as its measures were, the Parliament respected scrupulously the King's prejudices in other matters; and even when checked by an adjournment, resolved unanimously to support him in any earnest effort for the Protestant cause. For the moment its resolve gave vigour to the Royal policy. James had aimed throughout at the restitution of Bohemia to Ferdinand, and at inducing the Emperor, through the mediation of Spain, to abstain from any retaliation on the Palatinate. He now freed himself for a moment from the trammels of diplomacy, and enforced a cessation of the attack on his son-in-law's dominions by a threat of war. The

Digitized by Google

suspension of arms lasted through the summer; but mere threats could do no more, and on the conquest of the Upper Palatinate at the close of the truce by the forces of the Catholic League, James suddenly returned to his old resolve to rely on negotiations, and on the friendly mediation of Spain. Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador, who had become all-powerful at the English Court, was assured that no effectual aid should be sent to the Palatinate. The English fleet, which was cruising by way of menace off the Spanish coast, was called home. The King dismissed those of his ministers who still opposed a Spanish policy; and threatened on trivial pretexts a war with the Dutch, the one great Protestant power that remained in alliance with England, and was ready to back the Elector. But he had still to reckon with his Parliament; and the first act of the Parliament on its re-assembling was to demand a declaration of war with Spain. The instinct of the nation was wiser than the statecraft of the King. Ruined and enfeebled as she really was, Spain to the world at large still seemed the champion of Catholicism. It was the entry of her troops into the Palatinate which had first widened the local war in Bohemia into a great struggle for the suppression of Protestantism along the Rhine; above all it was Spanish influence, and the hopes held out of a marriage of his son with a Spanish Infanta, which were luring the King into his fatal dependence on the great enemy of the Protestant cause. In their petition the Houses coupled with their demands for war the demand of a Protestant marriage for their future King. Experience proved in later years how perilous it was for English freedom that the heir to the Crown should be brought up under a Catholic mother; but James was beside himself at their presumption in dealing with mysteries of State. "Bring stools for the Ambassadors," he cried in bitter irony as the committee of the Commons appeared before him. He refused the petition, forbade any further discussion of State policy, and threatened the speakers with the Tower. "Let us resort to our prayers," a member said calmly as the King's letter was read, "and then consider of this great business." The temper of the Commons was seen in the Protestation which met the Royal command to abstain from discussion. The House resolved "That the liberties, franchises, privileges, and jurisdictions of Parliament are the ancient and undoubted birthright and inheritance of the subjects of England; and that the arduous and urgent affairs concerning the King, State, and defence of the Realm, and of the Church of England, and the making and maintenance of laws, and redress of grievances, which daily happen within this Realm, are proper subjects and matter of Council and debate in Parliament. And that in the handling and proceeding of those businesses every member of the House hath, and of right ought to have, freedom of speech to propound, treat, reason, and bring to conclusion the same."

The King answered the Protestation by a characteristic outrage.

Digitized by Google

He sent for the Journals of the House, and with his own hand tore out the pages which contained it. "I will govern," he said, "according to the common weal, but not according to the common will." A few days after he dissolved the Parliament. "It is the best thing that has happened in the interests of Spain and of the Catholic religion since Luther began preaching," wrote the Count of Gondomar to his master, in his joy that all danger of war had passed away. "I am ready to depart," Sir Henry Saville, on the other hand, murmured on his death-bed, "the rather that having lived in good times I foresee worse." Abroad indeed all was lost; and Germany plunged wildly and blindly forward into the chaos of the Thirty Years' War. But for England the victory of freedom was practically won. James had himself ruined the system of Elizabeth. In his desire for personal government he had destroyed the authority of the Council. He had accustomed men to think lightly of the great ministers of the Crown, to see them browbeaten by favourites, and driven from office for corruption. He had disenchanted his people of their blind faith in the Crown by a policy at home and abroad which ran counter to every national instinct. He had quarrelled with, and insulted the Houses, as no English sovereign had ever done before; and all the while he was conscious that the authority he boasted of was passing, without his being able to hinder it, to the Parliament which he outraged. There was shrewdness as well as anger in his taunt at its "ambassadors." A power had at last risen up in the Commons with which the Monarchy was henceforth to reckon. In spite of the King's petulant outbreaks, Parliament had asserted and enforced its exclusive right to the control of taxation. It had suppressed monopolies. It had reformed abuses in the courts of law. It had revived the right of impeaching and removing from office even the highest ministers of the Crown. It had asserted its privilege of free discussion on all questions connected with the welfare of the realm. It had claimed to deal with the question of religion. It had even declared its will on the sacred "mystery" of foreign policy. James might tear the Protestation from its Journals, but there were pages in the record of the Parliament of 1621 which he never could tear out.

### Section III.—The King and the Parliament. 1623—1629.

[*Authorities.*—For the first part of this period we have still Mr. Gardiner's "Spanish Marriage," a book which throws a full and fresh light on one of the most obscure times in our history. From the accession of Charles, we are overwhelmed by a host of modern authorities, amongst which Mr. Forster's "Life of Sir John Eliot" stands first in value and interest for the years which it embraces. Among the general accounts of the reign of Charles, Mr. Disraeli's "Commentaries on the reign of Charles I." is the most prominent on the one side; Brodie's "History of the British Empire," and Godwin's "History of the Commonwealth," on the other. M. Guizot's work is accurate

Digitized by Google

and impartial, and Lingard of especial value for the history of the English Catholics, and for his detail of foreign affairs. For the ecclesiastical side, see Laud's "Diary." The Commons' Journal gives the proceedings of the Parliaments. Throughout this, as throughout the earlier periods from the accession of Henry the Eighth, the Calendars of State Papers, now issuing under the direction of the Master of the Rolls, are of the greatest historic value.]

---

**The Spanish Marriage.**

In the obstinacy with which he clung to his Spanish policy James stood absolutely alone; for not only the old nobility and the statesmen who preserved the tradition of the age of Elizabeth, but even his own ministers, with the exception of Buckingham, were at one with the Commons. The King's aim, as we have said, was to enforce peace on the combatants, and to bring about the restitution of the Palatinate to the Elector, through the influence of Spain. It was to secure this influence that he pressed for a closer union with the great Catholic power; and of this union, and the success of the policy which it embodied, the marriage of his son Charles with the Infanta, which had been held out as a lure to his vanity, was to be the sign. The more, however, James pressed for this consummation of his projects, the more Spain held back; but so bent was the King on its realization that, after fruitless negotiations, the Prince quitted England in disguise, and appeared with Buckingham at Madrid to claim his promised bride. It was in vain that the Spanish Court rose in its demands; 1623.
for every new demand was met by fresh concessions on the part of England. The abrogation of the penal laws against the Catholics, a Catholic education for the Prince's children, a Catholic household for the Infanta, all were no sooner asked than they were granted. But the marriage was still delayed, while the influence of the new policy on the war in Germany was hard to see. The Catholic League, and its army under the command of Count Tilly, won triumph after triumph over their divided foes. The reduction of Heidelberg and Mannheim completed the conquest of the Palatinate, whose Elector fled helplessly to Holland, while his Electoral dignity was transferred by the Emperor to the Duke of Bavaria. But there was still no sign of the hoped-for intervention on the part of Spain. At last the pressure of Charles himself brought about the disclosure of the secret of its policy. "It is a maxim of state with us," the Duke of Olivarez confessed, as the Prince demanded an energetic interference in Germany, "that the King of Spain must never fight against the Emperor. We cannot employ our forces against the Emperor." "If you hold to that," replied the Prince, "there is an end of all."

**Charles the First.**

His return was the signal for a burst of national joy. All London was alight with bonfires, in her joy at the failure of the Spanish match, and of the collapse, humiliating as it was, of the policy which had so long trailed English honour at the chariot-wheels of Spain. Charles

Digitized by Google

returned with the fixed resolve to take the direction of affairs out of his father's hands. The journey to Madrid had revealed to those around him the strange mixture of obstinacy and weakness in the Prince's character, the duplicity which lavished promises because it never purposed to be bound by any, the petty pride that subordinated every political consideration to personal vanity or personal pique. He had granted demand after demand, till the very Spaniards lost faith in his concessions. With rage in his heart at the failure of his efforts, he had renewed his betrothal on the very eve of his departure, only that he might insult the Infanta by its withdrawal when he was safe at home. But to England at large the baser features of his character were still unknown. The stately reserve, the personal dignity and decency of manners which distinguished the Prince, contrasted favourably with the gabble and indecorum of his father. The courtiers indeed who saw him in his youth, would often pray God that "he might be in the right way when he set; for if he was in the wrong he would prove the most wilful of any king that ever reigned." But the nation was willing to take his obstinacy for firmness; as it took the pique which inspired his course on his return for patriotism and for the promise of a nobler rule.

1624. His first acts were energetic enough. The King was forced to summon a Parliament, and to concede the point on which he had broken with the last, by laying before it the whole question of the Spanish negotiations. Buckingham and the Prince personally joined the Parliament in its demand for a rupture of the treaties and a declaration of war. A subsidy was eagerly voted; the persecution of the Catholics, which had long been suspended out of deference to Spanish intervention, recommenced with vigour. The head of the Spanish party in the ministry, Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex, the Lord Treasurer, was impeached on a charge of corruption, and dismissed from office. James was swept along helplessly by the tide; but, helpless as he was, his shrewdness saw clearly enough the turn that things were really taking. "You are making a rod for your own back," he said to Buckingham, when his favourite pressed him to consent to Cranfield's disgrace. But Charles and Buckingham were still resolute in their project of war. The Spanish ambassador quitted the realm; a treaty of alliance was concluded with Holland; negotiations were begun with the Lutheran Princes of North Germany, who had looked coolly on at the ruin of the Calvinistic Elector-Palatine; and the marriage of Charles with Henrietta, a daughter of

1625. Henry the Fourth of France, and sister of its King, promised a renewal of the system of Elizabeth. At this juncture the death of the old King placed Charles upon the throne; and his first Parliament met him in a passion of loyalty. "We can hope everything from the King who now governs us," cried one of the leading patriots of the Commons. But there were cooler heads in the Commons than Sir Benjamin Rudyard's; and, loyal as the Parliament was, enough had

Digitized by Google

taken place in the short interval between the accession of the new monarch and its assembling to temper its loyalty with caution.

The war with Spain, it must be remembered, meant to common Englishmen a war with Catholicism; and the fervour against Popery without roused a corresponding fervour against Popery within the realm. Every Papist seemed to Protestant eyes an enemy at home. A Churchman who leaned to Popery was a traitor in the ranks. The temper of the Commons on these points was clear to every observer. "Whatever mention does break forth of the fears or dangers in religion, and the increase of Popery," wrote a member who was noting the proceedings of the House, "their affections are much stirred." But Charles had already renewed the toleration of the Catholics, and warned the House to leave priest and recusant to the discretion of the Crown. It was soon plain that his ecclesiastical policy would be even more hostile to the Puritans than that of his father had been. Bishop Laud was put practically at the head of ecclesiastical affairs, and Laud had at once drawn up a list of ministers divided ominously into "orthodox" and "Puritan." The most notorious among the High Church divines, Doctor Montagu, advocated in his sermons the Divine right of Kings and the Real Presence, besides slighting the Protestant churches of the Continent in favour of the Church of Rome. The first act of the Commons was to summon Montagu to their bar, and to commit him to the Tower. But there were other grounds for their distrust besides the King's ecclesiastical tendency. The subsidy of the last Parliament had been wasted, yet Charles still refused to declare with what power England was at war, or to avow that the great fleet he was manning was destined to act against Spain. The real part which he had played in the marriage negotiations had gradually been revealed, and the discovery had destroyed all faith in his Protestant enthusiasm. His reserve therefore was met by a corresponding caution. While voting a subsidy, the Commons restricted their grant of certain Customs duties, which had commonly been granted to the new sovereign for life, to a single year. The restriction was taken as an insult; Charles refused to accept the grant, and Buckingham resolved to break with the Parliament at any cost. He suddenly demanded a new subsidy, a demand made merely to be denied, and which died without debate. But the denial increased the King's irritation, and he marked it by drawing Montagu from the Tower, by promoting him to a Royal chaplaincy, and by levying the disputed customs on his own authority. The Houses met at Oxford in a sterner temper. "England," cried Sir Robert Philips, "is the last monarchy that yet retains her liberties. Let them not perish now!" But the Commons had no sooner announced their resolve to consider public grievances before entering on other business than they were met by a dissolution. Buckingham, who was more powerful with Charles



Digitized by Google

SEC. III. THE KING AND THE PARLIAMENT. 1628-1629.

than he had been with his father, had resolved to lure England from her constitutional struggle by a great military triumph; and staking everything on success, he sailed for the Hague to conclude a general alliance against the House of Austria, while a fleet of ninety vessels and ten thousand soldiers left Plymouth for the coast of Spain. But if the projects of Charles were bolder than those of his predecessor, his execution of them was just as incapable. The alliance broke utterly down. After an idle descent on Cadiz the Spanish expedition returned, broken with mutiny and disease. The enormous debt which had been incurred in its equipment forced the favourite to advise a new summons of the Houses; but he was keenly alive to the peril in which his failure had plunged him, and to a coalition which had been formed between his rivals at Court and the leaders of the last Parliament. His reckless daring led him to anticipate the danger, and by a series of blows to strike terror into his opponents. Lord Pembroke was forced to a humiliating submission; Lord Arundel was sent to the Tower. Sir Thomas Wentworth, Cope, and four other leading patriots were made Sheriffs of their counties, and thus prevented from sitting in the coming Parliament. But their exclusion only left the field free for a more terrible foe.

**Eliot.**

If Hampden and Pym are the great figures which embody the later national resistance, the earlier struggle for Parliamentary liberty centres in the figure of Sir John Eliot. Of an old family—ennobled since his time—which had settled under Elizabeth near the fishing hamlet of St. Germains, and whose stately mansion gives its name of Port Eliot to a little town on the Tamar, he had risen to the post of Vice-Admiral of Devonshire under the patronage of Buckingham, and had seen his activity in the suppression of piracy in the Channel rewarded by an unjust imprisonment. He was now in the first vigour of manhood, with a mind exquisitely cultivated and familiar with the poetry and learning of his day, a nature singularly lofty and devout, a fearless and vehement temper. There was a hot impulsive element in his nature which showed itself in youth in his drawing sword on a neighbour who denounced him to his father, and which in later years gave its characteristic fire to his eloquence. But his intellect was as clear and cool as his temper was ardent. In the general enthusiasm which followed on the failure of the Spanish Marriage, he had stood almost alone in pressing for a recognition of the rights of Parliament, as a preliminary to any real reconciliation with the Crown. He fixed, from the very outset of his career, on the responsibility of the royal ministers to Parliament, as the one critical point for English liberty. It was to enforce the demand of this that he availed himself of Buckingham's sacrifice of the Treasurer, Cranfield, to the resentment of the Commons. "The greater the delinquent," he urged, "the greater the delict. They are a happy thing, great men and officers, if they be good, and one of the

Digitized by Google

greatest blessings of the land: but power converted into evil is the greatest curse that can befall it." But the new Parliament had hardly met, when he came to the front to threaten a greater criminal than Cranfield. So menacing were his words, as he called for an inquiry into the failure before Cadiz, that Charles himself stooped to answer threat with threat. "I see," he wrote to the House, "you especially aim at the Duke of Buckingham. I must let you know that I will not allow any of my servants to be questioned among you, much less such as are of eminent place and near to me." A more direct attack on a right already acknowledged in the impeachment of Bacon and Cranfield could hardly be imagined, but Eliot refused to move from his constitutional ground. The King was by law irresponsible, he "could do no wrong." If the country therefore was to be saved from a pure despotism, it must be by enforcing the responsibility of the ministers who counselled and executed his acts. Eliot persisted in denouncing Buckingham's incompetence and corruption, and the Commons ordered the subsidy which the Crown had demanded to be brought in "when we shall have presented our grievances, and received his Majesty's answer thereto." Charles summoned them to Whitehall, and commanded them to cancel the condition. He would grant them "liberty of counsel, but not of control;" and he closed the interview with a significant threat. "Remember," he said, "that Parliaments are altogether in my power for their calling, sitting, and dissolution: and therefore, as I find the fruits of them to be good or evil, they are to continue or not to be." But the will of the Commons was as resolute as the will of the King. Buckingham's impeachment was voted and carried to the Lords. The favourite took his seat as a peer to listen to the charge with so insolent an air of contempt that one of the managers appointed by the Commons to conduct it turned sharply on him. "Do you jeer, my Lord!" said Sir Dudley Digges. "I can show you when a greater man than your Lordship—as high as you in place and power, and as deep in the King's favour—has been hanged for as small a crime as these articles contain." The "proud carriage" of the Duke provoked an invective from Eliot which marks a new era in Parliamentary speech. From the first the vehemence and passion of his words had contrasted with the grave, colourless reasoning of older speakers. His opponents complained that Eliot aimed to "stir up affections." The quick emphatic sentences he substituted for the cumbrous periods of the day, his rapid argument, his vivacious and caustic allusions, his passionate appeals, his fearless invective, struck a new note in English eloquence. The frivolous ostentation of Buckingham, his very figure blazing with jewels and gold, gave point to the fierce attack. "He has broken those nerves and sinews of our land, the stores and treasures of the King. There needs no search for it. It is too visible. His profuse expenses, his

1626.



Digitized by Google

SEC. III.
THE KING AND THE PARLIAMENT.
1623-1629.

superfluous feasts, his magnificent buildings, his riots, his excesses, what are they but the visible evidences of an express exhausting of the State, a chronicle of the immensity of his waste of the revenues of the Crown?" With the same terrible directness Eliot reviewed the Duke's greed and corruption, his insatiate ambition, his seizure of all public authority, his neglect of every public duty, his abuse for selfish ends of the powers he had accumulated. "The pleasure of his Majesty, his known directions, his public acts, his acts of council, the decrees of courts—all must be made inferior to this man's will. No right, no interest may withstand him. Through the power of state and justice he has dared ever to strike at his own ends." "My Lords," he ended, after a vivid parallel between Buckingham and Sejanus, "you see the man! What have been his actions, what he is like, you know! I leave him to your judgment. This only is conceived by us, the knights, citizens, and burgesses of the Commons House of Parliament, that by him came all our evils, in him we find the causes, and on him must be the remedies! Pereat qui perdere cuncta festinat. Opprimatur ne omnes opprimat!"

**The King and the People.**

The reply of Charles was as fierce and sudden as the attack of Eliot. He hurried to the House of Peers to avow as his own the deeds with which Buckingham was charged. Eliot and Digges were called from their seats, and committed prisoners to the Tower. The Commons, however, refused to proceed with public business till their members were restored; and after a ten-days' struggle Eliot was released. But his release was only a prelude to the close of the Parliament. "Not one moment," the King replied to the prayer of his Council for delay; and the final remonstrance in which the Commons begged him to dismiss Buckingham from his service for ever was met by their instant dissolution. The remonstrance was burnt by Royal order, Eliot was deprived of his Vice-Admiralty, and the subsidies which the Parliament had refused to grant till their grievances were redressed were levied in the arbitrary form of benevolences. But the tide of public resistance was slowly rising. Refusals to give anything, "save by way of Parliament," came in from county after county. The arguments of the judges, who summoned the subsidy-men of Middlesex and Westminster to persuade them to comply, were met by the crowd with a tumultuous shout of "a Parliament! a Parliament! else no subsidies!" Kent stood out to a man. In Bucks the very justices neglected to ask for the "free gift." The freeholders of Cornwall only answered that, "if they had but two kine, they would sell one of them for supply to his Majesty—in a Parliamentary way." The failure of the voluntary benevolence was met by the levy of a forced loan. Commissioners were named to assess the amount which every landowner was bound to lend, and to examine on oath all who refused. Every means of persuasion, as of force, was

Digitized by Google

resorted to. The High Church pulpits resounded with the cry of "passive obedience." Dr. Mainwaring preached before Charles himself, that the King needed no Parliamentary warrant for taxation, and that to resist his will was to incur eternal damnation. Soldiers were quartered on recalcitrant boroughs. Poor men who refused to lend were pressed into the army or navy. Stubborn tradesmen were flung into prison. Buckingham himself undertook the task of overawing the nobles and the gentry. Among the bishops, the Primate and Bishop Williams of Lincoln alone resisted the King's will. The first was suspended on a frivolous pretext, and the second sent to the Tower. But in the country at large resistance was universal. The northern counties in a mass set the Crown at defiance. The Lincolnshire farmers drove the Commissioners from the town. Shropshire, Devon, and Warwickshire "refused utterly." Eight peers, with Lord Essex and Lord Warwick at their head, declined to comply with the exaction as illegal. Two hundred country gentlemen, whose obstinacy had not been subdued by their transfer from prison to prison, were summoned before the Council. John Hampden, as yet only a young Buckinghamshire squire, appeared at the board to begin that career of patriotism which has made his name dear to Englishmen. "I could be content to lend," he said, "but fear to draw on myself that curse in Magna Charta, which should be read twice a year against those who infringe it." So close an imprisonment in the Gate House rewarded his protest, "that he never afterwards did look like the same man he was before." With gathering discontent as well as bankruptcy before him, nothing could save the Duke but a great military success; and he equipped a force of seven thousand men for the maddest and most profligate of all his enterprises. In the great struggle with Catholicism the hopes of every Protestant rested on the union of England with France against the House of Austria. From causes never fully explained, but in which a personal pique against the French minister, Cardinal Richelieu, mingled with the desire to win an easy popularity at home by supporting the French Huguenots, Buckingham at this juncture broke suddenly with France, sailed in person to the Isle of Rhé, and roused the great Huguenot city of Rochelle to revolt. The expedition was as disastrous as it was impolitic. After a useless siege of the castle of St. Martin, the English troops were forced to fall back along a narrow causeway to their ships; and in the retreat two thousand fell, without the loss of a single man to their enemies.

1627

The first result of Buckingham's folly was the fall of Rochelle and the ruin of the Huguenot cause in France. Indirectly, as we have seen, it helped on the ruin of the cause of Protestantism in Germany. But in England it forced on Charles, overwhelmed as he was with debt and shame, the summoning of a new Parliament; a Parliament which met in a mood even more resolute than the last.

**The Petition of Right**

Digitized by Google

SEC. III.
THE KING AND THE PARLIAMENT. 1623-1629.

The Court candidates were everywhere rejected. The patriot leaders were triumphantly returned. To have suffered in the recent resistance to arbitrary taxation was the sure road to a seat. In spite of Eliot's counsel, all other grievances, even that of Buckingham himself, gave place to the craving for redress of wrongs done to personal liberty. "We must vindicate our ancient liberties," said Sir Thomas Wentworth, in words soon to be remembered against himself: "we must reinforce the laws made by our ancestors. We must set such a stamp upon them, as no licentious spirit shall dare hereafter to invade them." Heedless of sharp and menacing messages from the King, of demands that they should take his "Royal word" for their liberties, the House bent itself to one great work,
1628. the drawing up a Petition of Right. The statutes that protected the subject against arbitrary taxation, against loans and benevolences, against punishment, outlawry, or deprivation of goods, otherwise than by lawful judgment of his peers, against arbitrary imprisonment without stated charge, against billeting of soldiery on the people or enactment of martial law in time of peace, were formally recited. The breaches of them under the last two sovereigns, and above all since the dissolution of the last Parliament, were recited as formally. At the close of this significant list, the Commons prayed "that no man hereafter be compelled to make or yield any gift, loan, benevolence, tax, or such like charge, without common consent by Act of Parliament. And that none be called to make answer, or to take such oaths, or to be confined or otherwise molested or disputed concerning the same, or for refusal thereof. And that no freeman may in such manner as is before mentioned be imprisoned or detained. And that your Majesty would be pleased to remove the said soldiers and mariners, and that your people may not be so burthened in time to come. And that the commissions for proceeding by martial law may be revoked and annulled, and that hereafter no commissions of like nature may issue forth to any person or persons whatsoever to be executed as aforesaid, lest by colour of them any of your Majesty's subjects be destroyed and put to death, contrary to the laws and franchises of the land. All which they humbly pray of your most excellent Majesty, as their rights and liberties, according to the laws and statutes of the realm. And that your Majesty would also vouchsafe to declare that the awards, doings, and proceedings to the prejudice of your people in any of the premisses shall not be drawn hereafter into consequence or example. And that your Majesty would be pleased graciously for the further comfort and safety of your people to declare your Royal will and pleasure, that in the things aforesaid all your officers and ministers shall serve you according to the laws and statutes of this realm, as they tender the honour of your Majesty and the prosperity of the kingdom." It was in vain that the

Digitized by Google

Lords desired to conciliate Charles by a reservation of his "sovereign power." "Our petition," Pym quietly replied, "is for the laws of England, and this power seems to be another power distinct from the power of the law." The Lords yielded, but Charles gave an evasive reply; and the failure of the more moderate counsels for which his own had been set aside, called Eliot again to the front. In a speech of unprecedented boldness he moved the presentation to the King of a Remonstrance on the state of the realm. But at the moment when he again touched on Buckingham's removal as the preliminary of any real improvement the Speaker of the House interposed. "There was a command laid on him," he said, "to interrupt any that should go about to lay an aspersion on the King's ministers." The breach of their privilege of free speech produced a scene in the Commons such as St. Stephen's had never witnessed before. Eliot sate abruptly down amidst the solemn silence of the House. "Then appeared such a spectacle of passions," says a letter of the time, "as the like had seldom been seen in such an assembly: some weeping, some expostulating, some prophecying of the fatal ruin of our kingdom, some playing the divines in confessing their sins and country's sins which drew these judgments upon us, some finding, as it were, fault with those that wept. There were above an hundred weeping eyes, many who offered to speak being interrupted and silenced by their own passions." Pym himself rose only to sit down choked with tears. At last Sir Edward Coke found words to blame himself for the timid counsels which had checked Eliot at the beginning of the Session, and to protest "that the author and source of all those miseries was the Duke of Buckingham."

**The Death of Buckingham.**

Shouts of assent greeted the resolution to insert the Duke's name in their Remonstrance. But the danger to his favourite overcame the King's obstinacy, and to avert it he suddenly offered to consent to the Petition of Right. His consent won a grant of subsidy from the Parliament, and such a ringing of bells and lighting of bonfires from the people "as were never seen but upon his Majesty's return from Spain." But, like all Charles's concessions, it came too late to effect the end at which he aimed. The Commons persisted in presenting their Remonstrance. Charles received it coldly and ungraciously; while Buckingham, who had stood defiantly at his master's side as he was denounced, fell on his knees to speak. "No, George!" said the King as he raised him; and his demeanor gave emphatic proof that the Duke's favour remained undiminished. "We will perish together, George," he added at a later time, "if thou dost." No shadow of his doom, in fact, had fallen over the brilliant favourite, when, after the prorogation of the Parliament, he set out to take command of a new expedition for the relief of Rochelle. But a lieutenant in the navy, John Felton, soured by neglect and wrongs, had found in

Digitized by Google

SEC. III.
THE KING AND THE PARLIAMENT.
1623-1629.

the Remonstrance some fancied sanction for the revenge he plotted, and, mixing with the throng which crowded the hall at Portsmouth, he stabbed Buckingham to the heart. Charles flung himself on his bed in a passion of tears when the news reached him; but outside the Court it was welcomed with a burst of joy. Young Oxford bachelors, grave London aldermen, vied with each other in drinking healths to Felton. "God bless thee, little David," cried an old woman, as the murderer passed manacled by; "the Lord comfort thee," shouted the crowd, as the Tower gates closed on him. The very crews of the Duke's armament at Portsmouth shouted to the King, as he witnessed their departure, a prayer that he would "spare John Felton, their sometime fellow soldier." But whatever national hopes the fall of Buckingham had aroused were quickly dispelled. Weston, a creature of the Duke, became Lord Treasurer, and his system remained unchanged. "Though our Achan is cut off," said Eliot, "the accursed thing remains."

**The Quarrel of Religion.**

It seemed as if no act of Charles could widen the breach which his reckless lawlessness had made between himself and his subjects. But there was one thing dearer to England than free speech in Parliament, than security for property, or even personal liberty; and that one thing was, in the phrase of the day, "the Gospel." The gloom which at the outset of this reign we saw settling down on every Puritan heart had deepened with each succeeding year. The great struggle abroad had gone more and more against Protestantism, and at this moment the end of the cause seemed to have come. In Germany Lutheran and Calvinist alike lay at last beneath the heel of the Catholic House of Austria. The fall of Rochelle left the Huguenots of France at the feet of a Roman Cardinal. While England was thrilling with excitement at the thought that her own hour of deadly peril might come again, as it had come in the year of the Armada, Charles raised Laud to the Bishopric of London, and entrusted him with the direction of ecclesiastical affairs. To the excited Protestantism of the country, Laud, and the High Churchmen whom he headed, seemed a danger more really formidable than the Popery which was making such mighty strides abroad. They were traitors at home, traitors to God and their country at once. Their aim was to draw the Church of England farther away from the Protestant Churches, and nearer to the Church which Protestants regarded as Babylon. They aped Roman ceremonies. Cautiously and tentatively they were introducing Roman doctrine. But they had none of the sacerdotal independence which Rome had at any rate preserved. They were abject in their dependence on the Crown. Their gratitude for the Royal protection which enabled them to defy the religious instincts of the realm showed itself in their erection of the most dangerous pretensions of the monarchy into religious dogmas. Their model,

Digitized by Google

Bishop Andrewes, declared James to have been inspired by God. They preached passive obedience to the worst tyranny. They declared the person and goods of the subject to be at the King's absolute disposal. They turned religion into a systematic attack on English liberty. Up to this time, however, they had been little more than a knot of courtly parsons—for the mass of the clergy, like their flocks, were steady Puritans—but the well-known energy of Laud promised a speedy increase of their numbers and their power. Sober men looked forward to a day when every pulpit would be ringing with exhortations to passive obedience, with denunciations of Calvinism and apologies for Rome. Of all the members of the House of Commons Eliot was least fanatical in his natural bent, but the religious crisis swept away for the moment all other thoughts from his mind. "Danger enlarges itself in so great a measure," he wrote from the country, "that nothing but Heaven shrouds us from despair." The House met in 1629. the same temper. The first business it called up was that of religion. "The Gospel," Eliot burst forth, "is that Truth in which this kingdom has been happy through a long and rare prosperity. This ground, therefore, let us lay for a foundation of our building, that that Truth, not with words, but with actions we will maintain!" "There is a ceremony," he went on, "used in the Eastern Churches, of standing at the repetition of the Creed, to testify their purpose to maintain it, not only with their bodies upright, but with their swords drawn. Give me leave to call that a custom very commendable!" The Commons answered their leader's challenge by a solemn vow. They avowed that they held for truth that sense of the Articles as established by Parliament, which by the public act of the Church, and the general and current exposition of the writers of their Church, had been delivered unto them. But the debates over religion were suddenly interrupted. The Commons, who had deferred all grant of customs till the wrong done in the illegal levy of them was redressed, had summoned the farmers of those dues to the bar; but though they appeared, they pleaded the King's command as a ground for their refusal to answer. The House was proceeding to a protest, when the Speaker signified that he had received a Royal order to adjourn. Dissolution was clearly at hand, and the long-suppressed indignation broke out in a scene of strange disorder. The Speaker was held down in the chair, while Eliot, still clinging to his great principle of ministerial responsibility, denounced the new Treasurer as the adviser of the measure. "None have gone about to break Parliaments," he added in words to which after events gave a terrible significance, "but in the end Parliaments have broken them." The doors were locked, and in spite of the Speaker's protests, of the repeated knocking of the usher sent by Charles to summon the Commons to his presence in the Lords' chamber, and of the gathering tumult within the House itself, the loud

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV. NEW ENGLAND.

"Aye, Aye" of the bulk of the members supported Eliot in his last vindication of English liberty. By successive resolutions the Commons declared whosoever should bring in innovations in religion, or whatever minister advised the levy of subsidies not granted in Parliament, "a capital enemy to the Kingdom and Commonwealth," and every subject voluntarily complying with illegal acts and demands "a betrayer of the liberty of England, and an enemy of the same."

### Section IV.—New England.

[*Authorities.*—The admirable account of American colonization given by Mr. Bancroft ("History of the United States") may be corrected in some points of detail by Mr. Gardiner's "History of England" (cap. vi.), and "Spanish Marriage" (cap. xliii.). For Laud himself, see his remarkable "Diary." His work at Lambeth is described in Prynne's scurrilous "Canterbury's Doom."

---

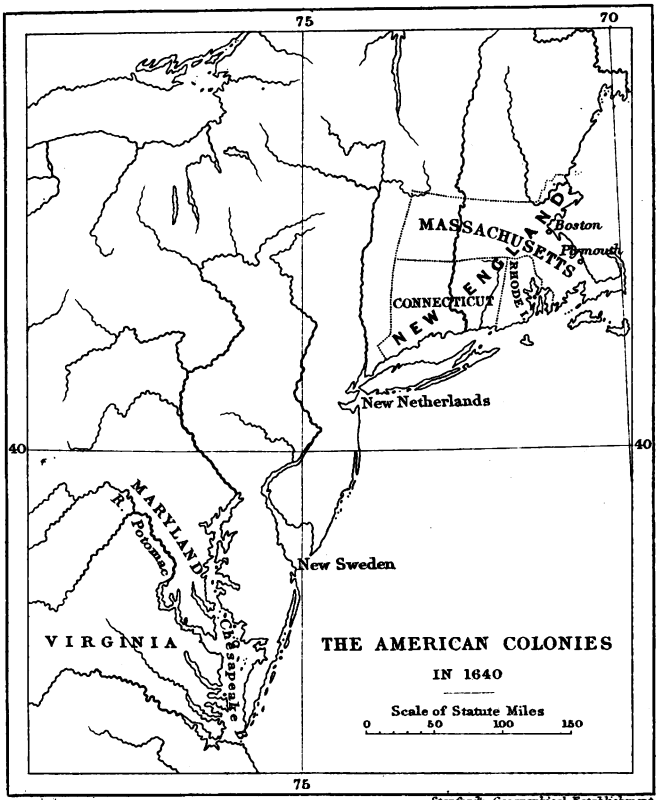
**England and the New World.**

The dissolution of the Parliament of 1629 marked the darkest hour of Protestantism, whether in England or in the world at large. But it was in this hour of despair that the Puritans won their noblest triumph. They "turned," to use Canning's words in a far truer and grander sense than that which he gave to them, they "turned to the New World to redress the balance of the Old." It was during the years of tyranny which followed the close of the third Parliament of Charles that the great Puritan emigration founded the States of New England.

The Puritans were far from being the earliest among the English colonists of North America. There was little in the circumstances which attended the first discovery of the Western world which promised well for freedom; its earliest result, indeed, was to give an enormous impulse to the most bigoted and tyrannical of the Continental powers, and to pour the wealth of Mexico and Peru into the treasury of Spain. But while the Spanish galleons traversed the Southern seas, and Spanish settlers claimed the southern part of the great continent for the Catholic crown, the truer instinct of Englishmen drew them to the ruder and more barren districts along the shore of Northern America. Long before the time of Columbus the fisheries of the North Sea had made the merchants of Bristol familiar with the coasts of Greenland; and two years before the great navigator reached the actual mainland of America, a Venetian merchant, John Cabot, who dwelt at Bristol, had landed with a crew of English sailors among the icy solitudes of Labrador. A year later his son, Sebastian Cabot, sailing from the same English port to the same point on the American coast, pushed south as far as Maryland, and north as high as Hudson's Bay. For a long time, however, no one followed in the track of these bold adventurers. While France settled its Canadian colonists along the St.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google




London; Macmillan & Cº

Digitized by Google

Lawrence, and Spain—already mistress of the South—extended its dominions as far northwards as Florida, the attention of Englishmen limited itself to the fisheries of Newfoundland. It was only in the reign of Elizabeth that men's thoughts turned again to the discoveries of Cabot. Frobisher, in a vessel no bigger than a man-of-war's barge, made his way to the coast of Labrador; and the false news which he brought back of the existence of gold mines there drew adventurer after adventurer among the icebergs of Hudson's Straits. Luckily the quest of gold proved a vain one; and the nobler spirits among those who had engaged in it turned to plans of colonization. But the country, vexed by long winters and thinly peopled by warlike tribes of Indians, gave a rough welcome to the earlier colonists. After a fruitless attempt to form a settlement, Sir Humphry Gilbert, one of the noblest spirits of his time, turned homewards again, to find his fate in the stormy seas. "We are as near to Heaven by sea as by land," were the famous words he was heard to utter, ere the light of his little bark was lost for ever in the darkness of the night. An expedition sent by his brother-in-law, Sir Walter Raleigh, explored Pamlico Sound; and the country they discovered, a country where, in their poetic fancy, "men lived after the manner of the Golden Age," received from Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen, the name of Virginia. The introduction of tobacco and of the potato into Europe dates from Raleigh's discovery; but the energy of his settlers was distracted by the delusive dream of gold, the hostility of the native tribes drove them from the coast, and it is through the gratitude of later times for what he strove to do, rather than for what he did, that Raleigh, the capital of North Carolina, preserves his name. The first permanent settlement on the Chesapeake was effected in the beginning of the reign of James the First, and its success was due to the conviction of the settlers that the secret of the New World's conquest lay simply in labour. Among the hundred and five colonists who originally landed, forty-eight were gentlemen, and only twelve were tillers of the soil. Their leader, John Smith, however, not only explored the vast bay of Chesapeake and discovered the Potomac and the Susquehannah, but held the little company together in the face of famine and desertion till the colonists had learnt the lesson of toil. In his letters to the colonizers at home he set resolutely aside the dream of gold. "Nothing is to be expected thence," he wrote of the new country, "but by labour;" and supplies of labourers, aided by a wise allotment of lands to each colonist, secured after five years of struggle the fortunes of Virginia. "Men fell to building houses and planting corn;" the very streets of Jamestown, as their capital was called from the reigning sovereign, were sown with tobacco; and in fifteen years the colony numbered five thousand souls.

1576.

1584

1606.

The laws and representative institutions of England were first intro-

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.
NEW ENGLAND.
**The "Pilgrim Fathers."**

duced into the New World in the settlement of Virginia : ten years later a principle as unknown to England as it was to the greater part of Europe found its home in a second colony, which received its name of Maryland from Henrietta Maria, the queen of Charles the First. Calvert, Lord Baltimore, one of the best of the Stuart counsellors, was forced by his conversion to Catholicism to seek a shelter for himself and colonists of his new faith in the district across the Potomac, and round the head of the Chesapeake. As a purely Catholic settlement was impossible, he resolved to open the new colony to men of every faith. "No person within this province," ran the earliest law of Maryland, "professing to believe in Jesus Christ, shall be in any ways troubled, molested, or discountenanced for his or her religion, or in the free exercise thereof." Long however before Lord Baltimore's settlement in Maryland, only a few years indeed after the settlement of Smith in Virginia, the little church of Brownist or Independent refugees, whom we saw driven in Elizabeth's reign to Rotterdam, had resolved to quit Holland and find a home in the wilds of the New World. They were little disheartened by the tidings of suffering which came from the Virginian settlement. "We are well weaned," wrote their minister, John Robinson, "from the delicate milk of the mother-country, and inured to the difficulties of a strange land : the people are industrious and frugal. We are knit together as a body in a most sacred covenant of the Lord, of the violation whereof we make great conscience, and by virtue whereof we hold ourselves strictly tied to all care of each other's good and of the whole. It is not with us as with men whom small things can discourage." Returning from Holland to Southampton, they started in two small vessels for the new land : but one of these soon put back, and only its companion, the *Mayflower*, a bark of a hundred and eighty tons, with forty-one emigrants and their families on board, persisted in prosecuting its voyage. The little company of the "Pilgrim Fathers," as after-times loved to call them, landed on the barren coast of Massachusetts at a spot to which they gave the name of Plymouth, in memory of the last English port at which they touched. They had soon to face the long hard winter of the north, to bear sickness and famine ; even when these years of toil and suffering had passed there was a time when "they knew not at night where to have a bit in the morning." Resolute and industrious as they were, their progress was very slow ; and at the end of ten years they numbered only three hundred souls. But small as it was, the colony was now firmly established and the struggle for mere existence was over. "Let it not be grievous unto you," some of their brethren had written from England to the poor emigrants in the midst of their sufferings, "that you have been instrumental to break the ice for others. The honour shall be yours to the world's end."

1634.

1620.

Digitized by Google

From the moment of their establishment the eyes of the English Puritans were fixed on the little Puritan settlement in North America. The sanction of the Crown was necessary to raise it into a colony; and the aid which the merchants of Boston in Lincolnshire gave to the realization of this project was acknowledged in the name of its capital. Eight days before announcing his resolve to govern henceforth without Parliaments, Charles granted the charter which established the colony of Massachusetts; and by the Puritans at large the grant was at once regarded as a Providential call. Out of the failure of their great constitutional struggle, and the pressing danger to "godliness" in England, rose the dream of a land in the West where religion and liberty could find a safe and lasting home. The third Parliament of Charles was hardly dissolved, when "conclusions" for the establishment of a great colony on the other side the Atlantic were circulating among gentry and traders, and descriptions of the new country of Massachusetts were talked over in every Puritan household. The proposal was welcomed with the quiet, stern enthusiasm which marked the temper of the time; but the words of a well-known minister show how hard it was even for the sternest enthusiasts to tear themselves from their native land. "I shall call that my country," said John Winthrop, in answer to feelings of this sort, "where I may most glorify God and enjoy the presence of my dearest friends." The answer was accepted, and the Puritan emigration began on a scale such as England had never before seen. The two hundred who first sailed for Salem were soon followed by Winthrop himself with eight hundred men; and seven hundred more followed ere the first year of the Royal tyranny had run its course. Nor were the emigrants, like the earlier colonists of the South, "broken men," adventurers, bankrupts, criminals; or simply poor men and artisans, like the Pilgrim Fathers of the *Mayflower*. They were in great part men of the professional and middle classes; some of them men of large landed estate, some zealous clergymen like Cotton, Hooker, and Roger Williams, some shrewd London lawyers, or young scholars from Oxford. The bulk were god-fearing farmers from Lincolnshire and the Eastern counties. They desired in fact "only the best" as sharers in their enterprise; men driven forth from their fatherland not by earthly want, or by the greed of gold, or by the lust of adventure, but by the fear of God, and the zeal for a godly worship. But strong as was their zeal, it was not without a wrench that they tore themselves from their English homes. "Farewell, dear England!" was the cry which burst from the first little company of emigrants as its shores faded from their sight. "Our hearts," wrote Winthrop's followers to the brethren whom they had left behind, "shall be fountains of tears for your everlasting welfare, when we shall be in our poor cottages in the wilderness."

1629.

1630.

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.
NEW ENGLAND.
**Land and the Puritans.**

During the next two years, as the sudden terror which had found so violent an outlet in Eliot's warnings died for the moment away, there was a lull in the emigration. But the measures of Laud soon revived the panic of the Puritans. The shrewdness of James had read the very heart of the man, when Buckingham pressed for his first advancement to the see of St. Asaph. "He hath a restless spirit," said the old King, "which cannot see when things are well, but loves to toss and change, and to bring matters to a pitch of reformation floating in his own brain. Take him with you, but by my soul you will repent it." Cold, pedantic, ridiculous, superstitious as he was (he notes in his diary the entry of a robin-redbreast into his study as a matter of grave moment), William Laud rose out of the mass of court-prelates by his industry, his personal unselfishness, his remarkable capacity for administration. At a later period, when immersed in State-business, he found time to acquire so complete a knowledge of commercial affairs that the London merchants themselves owned him a master in matters of trade. But his real influence was derived from the unity of his purpose. He directed all the power of a clear, narrow mind, and a dogged will, to the realization of a single aim. His resolve was to raise the Church of England to what he conceived to be its real position as a branch, though a reformed branch, of the great Catholic Church throughout the world; protesting alike against the innovations of Rome and the innovations of Calvin, and basing its doctrines and usages on those of the Christian communion in the centuries which preceded the Council of Nicæa. The first step in the realization of such a theory was the severance of whatever ties had hitherto united the English Church to the Reformed Churches of the Continent. In Laud's view episcopal succession was of the essence of a Church, and by their rejection of bishops, the Lutheran and Calvinistic Churches of Germany and Switzerland had ceased to be Churches at all. The freedom of worship therefore which had been allowed to the Huguenot refugees from France, or the Walloons from Flanders, was suddenly withdrawn; and the requirement of conformity with the Anglican ritual drove them in crowds from the southern ports to seek toleration in Holland. The same conformity was required from the English soldiers and merchants abroad, who had hitherto attended without scruple the services of the Calvinistic churches. The English ambassador in Paris was forbidden to visit the Huguenot conventicle at Charenton. As Laud drew further from the Protestants of the Continent, he drew, consciously or unconsciously, nearer to Rome. His theory owned Rome as a true branch of the Church, though severed from that of England by errors and innovations against which Laud vigorously protested. But with the removal of these obstacles reunion would naturally follow, and his dream was that of bridging over the gulf which ever since the Reformation had parted the two Churches. The secret offer of a cardinal's hat proved

Digitized by Google

Rome's sense that Laud was doing his work for her; while his rejection of it, and his own reiterated protestations, prove equally that he was doing it unconsciously. Union with the great body of Catholicism, indeed, he regarded as a work which only time could bring about, but for which he could prepare the Church of England by raising it to a higher standard of Catholic feeling and Catholic practice. The great obstacle in his way was the Puritanism of nine-tenths of the English people, and on Puritanism he made war without mercy. No sooner had his elevation to the see of Canterbury placed him at the head of the English Church, than he turned the High Commission into a standing attack on the Puritan ministers. Rectors and vicars were scolded, suspended, deprived for "Gospel preaching." The use of the surplice, and the ceremonies most offensive to Puritan feeling, were enforced in every parish. The lectures founded in towns, which were the favourite posts of Puritan preachers, were rigorously suppressed. They found a refuge among the country gentlemen, and the Archbishop withdrew from the country gentlemen the privilege of keeping chaplains, which they had till then enjoyed. As parishes became vacant the High Church bishops filled them with men who denounced Calvinism, and declared passive obedience to the sovereign to be part of the law of God. The Puritans soon felt the stress of this process, and endeavoured to meet it by buying up the appropriations of livings, and securing through feeoffees a succession of Protestant ministers in the parishes of which they were patrons: but Laud cited the feeoffees into the Star Chamber, and roughly put an end to them. Nor was the persecution confined to the clergy. Under the two last reigns the small pocket-Bibles called the Geneva Bibles had become universally popular amongst English laymen; but their marginal notes were found to savour of Calvinism, and their importation was prohibited. The habit of receiving the communion in a sitting posture had become common, but kneeling was now enforced, and hundreds were excommunicated for refusing to comply with the injunction. A more galling means of annoyance was found in the different views of the two religious parties on the subject of Sunday. The Puritans identified the Lord's day with the Jewish Sabbath, and transferred to the one the strict observances which were required for the other. The Laudian clergy, on the other hand, regarded it simply as one among the holidays of the Church, and encouraged their flocks in the pastimes and recreations after service which had been common before the Reformation. The Crown under James had taken part with the High Churchmen, and had issued a "Book of Sports" which recommended certain games as lawful and desirable on the Lord's day. The Parliament, as might be expected, was stoutly on the other side, and had forbidden Sunday pastimes by statute. The general religious sense of the country was undoubtedly tending to a

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV
NEW ENGLAND.

stricter observance of the day, when Laud brought the contest to a sudden issue. He summoned the Chief-Justice, Richardson, who had enforced the statute in the western shires, to the Council-table, and rated him so violently that the old man came out complaining he had been all but choked by a pair of lawn sleeves. He then ordered every minister to read the Royal declaration in favour of Sunday pastimes from the pulpit. One Puritan minister had the wit to obey, and to close the reading with the significant hint, "you have heard read, good people, both the commandment of God and the commandment of man! Obey which you please." But the bulk refused to comply with the Archbishop's will. The result followed at which Laud no doubt had aimed. Hundreds of Puritan ministers were cited before the High Commission, and silenced or deprived. In the diocese of Norwich alone thirty parochial ministers were expelled from their cures.

**Laud and the Clergy.**

The suppression of Puritanism in the ranks of the clergy was only a preliminary to the real work on which the Archbishop's mind was set, the preparation for Catholic reunion by the elevation of the clergy to a Catholic standard in doctrine and ritual. Laud publicly avowed his preference of an unmarried to a married priesthood. Some of the bishops, and a large part of the new clergy who occupied the posts from which the Puritan ministers had been driven, advocated doctrines and customs which the Reformers had denounced as sheer Papistry; the practice, for instance, of auricular confession, a real presence in the Sacrament, or prayers for the dead. One prelate, Montagu, was in heart a convert to Rome. Another, Goodman, died acknowledging himself a Papist. Meanwhile Laud was indefatigable in his efforts to raise the civil and political status of the clergy to the point which it had reached ere the fatal blow of the Reformation fell on the priesthood. Among the archives of his see lies a large and costly volume in vellum, containing a copy of such records in the Tower as concerned the privileges of the clergy. Its compilation was entered in the Archbishop's diary as one among the "twenty-one things which I have projected to do if God bless me in them," and as among the fifteen to which before his fall he had been enabled to add his emphatic "done." The power of the Bishops' Courts, which had long fallen into decay, revived under his patronage. In 1636 he was able to induce the King to raise a prelate, Juxon, Bishop of London, to the highest civil post in the realm, that of Lord High Treasurer. "No Churchman had it since Henry the Seventh's time," Laud comments proudly. "I pray God bless him to carry it so that the Church may have honour, and the State service and content by it. And now, if the Church will not hold up themselves, under God I can do no more." As he aimed at a higher standard of Catholicism in the clergy, so he aimed at a nearer approach to the pomp of Catholicism in public

Digitized by Google

worship. His conduct in his own house at Lambeth brings out with singular vividness the reckless courage with which he threw himself across the religious instincts of a time when the spiritual aspect of worship was overpowering in most men's minds its æsthetic and devotional sides. Men noted as a fatal omen the accident which marked his first entry into Lambeth; for the overladen ferry-boat upset in the passage of the river, and though the horses and servants were saved, the Archbishop's coach remained at the bottom of the Thames. But no omen, carefully as he might note it, brought a moment's hesitation to the bold, narrow mind of the new Primate. His first act, he boasted, was the setting about a restoration of his chapel; and, as Laud managed it, his restoration was the simple undoing of all that had been done there by his predecessors since the Reformation. In Edward's time iconoclasm had dashed the stained glass from its windows, in Elizabeth's time the communion table had been moved into the middle of the chapel. It was probably Abbot who had abolished the organ and choir. Abbot, indeed, had put the finishing stroke on all attempts at a higher ceremonial. Neither he nor his household would bow at the name of Christ. The credence table had disappeared. Copes, still in use at the Communion in Parker's day, had ceased to be used in Laud's. Bare as its worship was, however, the chapel of Lambeth House was one of the most conspicuous among the ecclesiastical buildings of the time; it had seen the daily worship of every Primate since Cranmer, and was a place "whither many of the nobility, judges, clergy, and persons of all sorts, as well strangers as natives, usually resorted." But to Laud its state seemed intolerable. With characteristic energy he aided with his own hands in the replacement of the painted glass in its windows, and racked his wits in piecing the fragments together. The glazier was scandalized by the Primate's express command to repair and set up again the "broken crucifix" in the east window. The holy table was removed from the centre, and set altarwise against the eastern wall, with a cloth of arras behind it, on which was embroidered the history of the Last Supper. The elaborate woodwork of the screen, the rich copes of the chaplain, the silver candlesticks, the credence table, the organ and the choir, the stately ritual, the bowings at the sacred name, the genuflexions to the altar, made the chapel at last such a model of worship as Laud desired. If he could not exact an equal pomp of devotion in other quarters, he exacted as much as he could. Bowing to the altar was introduced into all cathedral churches. A royal injunction ordered the removal of the communion table, which for the last half-century or more had in almost every parish church stood in the middle of the aisle, back to its pre-Reformation position in the chancel, and secured it from profanation by a rail. The removal implied, and was understood to imply, a recognition of the Real Presence, and a denial of the



Digitized by Google

SEC. IV. NEW ENGLAND.

doctrine which Englishmen generally held about the Lord's Supper. But, strenuous as was the resistance Laud encountered, his pertinacity and severity warred it down. Vicars who denounced the change from their pulpits were fined, imprisoned, and deprived of their benefices. Churchwardens who refused or delayed to obey the injunction were rated at the Commission-table, and frightened into compliance.

**The Puritan Colonies**

In their last Remonstrance to the King the Commons had denounced Laud as the chief assailant of the Protestant character of the Church of England; and every year of his Primacy showed him bent upon justifying the accusation. His policy was no longer the purely conservative policy of Parker or Whitgift; it was aggressive and revolutionary. His "new counsels" threw whatever force there was in the feeling of conservatism into the hands of the Puritan, for it was the Puritan who now seemed to be defending the old character of the Church of England against its Primate's attacks. But backed as Laud was by the power of the Crown, the struggle became more hopeless every day. The Puritan saw his ministers silenced or deprived, his Sabbath profaned, the most sacred act of his worship brought near, as he fancied, to the Roman mass. Roman doctrine met him from the pulpit, Roman practices met him in the Church. We can hardly wonder that with such a world around them "godly people in England began to apprehend a special hand of Providence in raising this plantation" in Massachusetts; "and their hearts were generally stirred to come over." It was in vain that weaker men returned to bring news of hardships and dangers, and told how two hundred of the new comers had perished with their first winter. A letter from Winthrop told how the rest toiled manfully on. "We now enjoy God and Jesus Christ," he wrote to those at home, "and is not that enough? I thank God I like so well to be here as I do not repent my coming. I would not have altered my course though I had foreseen all these afflictions. I never had more content of mind." With the strength and manliness of Puritanism, its bigotry and narrowness had crossed the Atlantic too. Roger Williams, a young minister who held the doctrine of freedom of conscience, was driven from the new settlement, to become a preacher among the settlers of Rhode Island. The bitter resentment stirred in the emigrants by persecution at home was seen in their abolition of Episcopacy and their prohibition of the use of the Book of Common Prayer. The intensity of its religious sentiments turned the colony into a theocracy. "To the end that the body of the Commons may be preserved of honest and good men, it was ordered and agreed that for the time to come no man shall be admitted to the freedom of the body politic but such as are members of some of the churches within the bounds of the same." As Laud's hands grew heavier the number of Puritan emigrants rose fast. Three thousand new colonists arrived from England in a single year. The

1630.

Digitized by Google

landing of Harry Vane, the son of a Secretary of State, and destined to play one of the first parts in the coming revolution, seemed to herald the coming of the very heads of the Puritan movement. The story that a Royal embargo alone prevented Cromwell from crossing the seas is probably unfounded, but it is certain that nothing but the great change which followed on the Scotch rising prevented the flight of men of the highest rank. Lord Warwick secured the proprietorship of the Connecticut valley. Lord Saye and Sele and Lord Brooke began negotiations for transferring themselves to the New World. Hampden purchased a tract of land on the Narragansett. The growing stream of meaner emigrants marks the terrible pressure of the time. Between the sailing of Winthrop's expedition and the assembly of the Long Parliament, in the space, that is, of ten or eleven years, two hundred emigrant ships had crossed the Atlantic, and twenty thousand Englishmen had found a refuge in the West.

## Section V.—The Tyranny. 1629–1640.

[*Authorities.*—For the general events of the time, see previous sections. The "Strafford Letters," and the Calendars of Domestic State Papers for this period, give its real history. "Baillie's Letters" tell the story of the Scotch rising. Generally, Scotch affairs may be best studied in Mr. Burton's admirable "History of Scotland." Portraits of Weston, and most of the statesmen of this period, may be found in the earlier part of Clarendon's "History of the Rebellion."]

**The Suspension of Parliament.**

At the opening of his Third Parliament Charles had hinted in ominous words that the continuance of Parliament at all depended on its compliance with his will. "If you do not your duty," said the King, "mine would then order me to use those other means which God has put into my hand." The threat, however, failed to break the resistance of the Commons, and the ominous words passed into a settled policy. "We have showed," said a Proclamation which followed on the dissolution of the Houses, "by our frequent meeting our people, our love to the use of Parliament; yet, the late abuse having for the present driven us unwillingly out of that course, we shall account it presumption for any to prescribe any time unto us for Parliament."

No Parliament in fact met for eleven years. But it would be unjust to charge the King at the outset of this period with any definite scheme of establishing a tyranny, or of changing what he conceived to be the older constitution of the realm. He "hated the very name of Parliaments," but in spite of his hate he had no settled purpose of abolishing them. His belief was that England would in time recover its senses, and that then Parliament might re-assemble without inconvenience to the Crown. In the interval, however long it might be, he proposed to govern single-handed by the use of "those



Digitized by Google

SEC. V. THE TYRANNY. 1629-1640.

means which God had put into his hands." Resistance, indeed, he was resolved to put down. The leaders of the country party in the last Parliament were thrown into prison; and Eliot died, the first martyr of English liberty, in the Tower. Men were forbidden to speak of the re-assembling of a Parliament. Laud was encouraged to break the obstinate opposition of the Puritans by the enforcement of religious uniformity. But here the King stopped. The opportunity which might have suggested dreams of organized despotism to a Richelieu, suggested only means of filling the Exchequer to Charles. He had in truth neither the grander nor the meaner instincts of the born tyrant. He did not seek to gain an absolute power over his people, because he believed that his absolute power was already a part of the constitution of the country. He set up no standing army to secure it, partly because he was poor, but yet more because his faith in his position was such that he never dreamt of any effectual resistance. His expedients for freeing the Crown from that dependence on Parliaments against which his pride as a sovereign revolted were simply peace and economy. To secure the first he sacrificed an opportunity greater than ever his father had trodden under foot. The fortunes of the great struggle in Germany were suddenly reversed at this juncture by the appearance of Gustavus Adolphus, with a Swedish army, in the heart of Germany. Tilly was defeated and slain; the Catholic League humbled in the dust; Munich, the capital of its Bavarian leader, occupied by the Swedish army, and the Lutheran princes of North Germany freed from the pressure of the Imperial soldiery; while the Emperor himself, trembling within the walls of Vienna, was driven to call for aid from Wallenstein, an adventurer whose ambition he dreaded, but whose army could alone arrest the progress of the Protestant conqueror. The ruin that James had wrought was suddenly averted; but the victories of Protestantism had no more power to draw Charles out of the petty circle of his politics at home than its defeats had had power to draw James out of the circle of his imbecile diplomacy. To support Gustavus by arms, or even by an imposing neutrality, meant a charge on the Royal Treasury which necessitated a fresh appeal to the Commons; and this appeal Charles was resolved never to make. At the very crisis of the struggle therefore he patched up a hasty peace with both the two great Catholic powers of France and Spain, and fell back from any interference with the affairs of the Continent. His whole attention was absorbed by the pressing question of revenue. The debt was a large one; and the ordinary income of the Crown, unaided by parliamentary supplies, was utterly inadequate to meet its ordinary expenditure. Charles was himself frugal and laborious; and the administration of Weston, the new Lord Treasurer, whom he created Earl of Portland, contrasted advantageously with the waste and extravagance of the government under Buckingham. But economy

Digitized by Google

failed to close the yawning gulf of the Treasury, and the course into which Charles was driven by the financial pressure showed with how wise a prescience the Commons had fixed on the point of arbitrary taxation as the chief danger to constitutional freedom.

It is curious to see to what shifts the Royal pride was driven in its effort at once to fill the Exchequer, and yet to avoid, as far as it could, any direct breach of constitutional law in the imposition of taxes by the sole authority of the Crown. The dormant powers of the prerogative were strained to their utmost. The right of the Crown to force knighthood on the landed gentry was revived, in order to squeeze them into composition for the refusal of it. Fines were levied on them for the redress of defects in their title-deeds. A Commission of the Forests exacted large sums from the neighbouring landowners for their encroachments on Crown lands. London, the special object of courtly dislike, on account of its stubborn Puritanism, was brought within the sweep of Royal extortion by the enforcement of an illegal proclamation which James had issued, prohibiting its extension. Every house throughout the large suburban districts in which the prohibition had been disregarded was only saved from demolition by the payment of three years' rental to the Crown. The Treasury gained a hundred thousand pounds by this clever stroke, and Charles gained the bitter enmity of the great city whose strength and resources were fatal to him in the coming war. Though the Catholics were no longer troubled by any active persecution, and the Lord Treasurer was in heart a Papist, the penury of the Exchequer forced the Crown to maintain the old system of fines for "recusancy." Vexatious measures of extortion such as these were far less hurtful to the State than the conversion of justice into a means of supplying the Royal necessities by means of the Star Chamber. The jurisdiction of the King's Council had been revived, as we have seen, by Wolsey as a check on the nobles; and it had received great development, especially on the side of criminal law, during the Tudor reigns. Forgery, perjury, riot, maintenance, fraud, libel, and conspiracy, were the chief offences cognizable in this Court, but its scope extended to every misdemeanor, and especially to charges where, from the imperfection of the common law, or the power of offenders, justice was baffled in the lower Courts. Its process resembled that of Chancery: it usually acted on an information laid before it by the King's Attorney. Both witnesses and accused were examined on oath by special interrogatories, and the Court was at liberty to adjudge any punishment short of death. The possession of such a weapon would have been fatal to liberty under a great tyrant; under Charles it was turned simply to the profit of the Exchequer. Large numbers of cases which would ordinarily have come before the Courts of Common Law were called before the Star Chamber, simply for the purpose of levying fines for the Crown. The

Digitized by Google

SEC. V. THE TYRANNY. 1629-1640.

same motive accounts for the enormous penalties which were exacted for offences of a trivial character. The marriage of a gentleman with his niece was punished by the forfeiture of twelve thousand pounds, and fines of four and five thousand pounds were awarded for brawls between lords of the Court. Money for the fleet was procured by a stretch of the prerogative which led afterwards to the great contest over ship-money. The legal research of Noy, one of the law officers of the Crown, found precedents among the records in the Tower for the provision of ships for the King's use by the port-towns of the kingdom, and for the furnishing of their equipment by the maritime counties. The precedents dated from times when no permanent fleet existed, and when sea warfare was waged by vessels lent for the moment by the various ports. But they were seized as a means of equipping a permanent navy without cost to the Exchequer; and the writs which were issued to London and the chief English ports were enforced by fine and imprisonment. Shifts of this kind, however, did little to fill the Treasury, great as was the annoyance they caused. Charles was driven from courses of doubtful legality to a more open defiance of law. Monopolies, abandoned by Elizabeth, extinguished by Act of Parliament under James, and denounced with his own assent in the Petition of Right, were revived on a scale far more gigantic than had been seen before, the companies who undertook them paying a fixed duty on their profits as well as a large sum for the original concession of the monopoly. Wine, soap, salt, and almost every article of domestic consumption fell into the hands of monopolists, and rose in price out of all proportion to the profit gained by the Crown. "They sup in our cup," Colepepper said afterwards in the Long Parliament, "they dip in our dish, they sit by our fire; we find them in the dye-fat, the wash bowls, and the powdering tub. They share with the cutler in his box. They have marked and sealed us from head to foot." Nothing, indeed, better marks the character of Charles than his conduct as to the Petition of Right. He had given his assent to it, he was fond of bidding Parliament rely on his "Royal word," but the thought of his pledge seems never to have troubled him for an instant. From the moment he began his career of government without a Parliament every one of the abuses he had promised to abolish, such as illegal imprisonment, or tampering with the judges, was resorted to as a matter of course. His penury, in spite of the financial expedients we have described, drove him inevitably on to the fatal rock of illegal taxation. The exaction of Customs duties went on as of old at the ports. Writs were issued for the levy of "benevolences" from the shires. The resistance of the London merchants was roughly put down by the Star Chamber. Chambers, an alderman of London, who complained bitterly that men were worse off in Turkey than in England, was ruined by a fine of two thousand pounds, and died

Digitized by Google

broken-hearted in prison. The freeholders of the counties were more difficult to deal with. When those of Cornwall were called together at Bodmin to contribute to a voluntary loan, half the hundreds refused, and the yield of the rest came to little more than two thousand pounds. One of the Cornishmen has left an amusing record of the scene before the Commissioners appointed for assessment of the loan. "Some with great words and threatenings, some with persuasions," he says, "were drawn to it. I was like to have been complimented out of my money; but knowing with whom I had to deal, I held, when I talked with them, my hands fast in my pockets."

Strafford.

Vexatious indeed and illegal as were the proceedings of the Crown, there seems to have been little apprehension of any permanent danger to freedom in the country at large. To those who read the letters of the time there is something inexpressibly touching in the general faith of their writers in the ultimate victory of the Law. Charles was obstinate, but obstinacy was too common a foible amongst Englishmen to rouse any vehement resentment. The people were as stubborn as their King, and their political sense told them that the slightest disturbance of affairs must shake down the financial fabric which Charles was slowly building up, and force him back on subsidies and a Parliament. Meanwhile they would wait for better days, and their patience was aided by the general prosperity of the country. The long peace was producing its inevitable results in a vast extension of commerce and a rise of manufactures in the towns of the West Riding of Yorkshire. Fresh land was being brought into cultivation, and a great scheme was set on foot for reclaiming the Fens. The new wealth of the country gentry, through the increase of rent, was seen in the splendour of the houses which they were raising. The contrast of this peace and prosperity with the ruin and bloodshed of the Continent afforded a ready argument to the friends of the King's system. So tranquil was the outer appearance of the country that in Court circles all sense of danger had disappeared. "Some of the greatest statesmen and privy councillors," says May, "would ordinarily laugh when the word, 'liberty of the subject,' was named." There were courtiers bold enough to express their hope that "the King would never need any more Parliaments." But beneath this outer calm "the country," Clarendon honestly tells us while eulogizing the Peace, "was full of pride and mutiny and discontent." Thousands, as we have seen, were quitting England for America. The gentry held aloof from the Court. "The common people in the generality and the country freeholders would rationally argue of their own rights and the oppressions which were laid upon them." If Charles was content to deceive himself, there was one man among his ministers who saw that the people were right in their policy of patience, and that unless other measures were taken the fabric of Royal despotism would fall at the first breath of adverse

Digitized by Google

SEC. V. THE TYRANNY. 1629-1640.

fortune. Sir Thomas Wentworth, a great Yorkshire landowner and one of the representatives of his county in Parliament, had stood for years past among the more prominent members of the Country party in the Commons. But from the first moment of his appearance in public his passionate desire had been to find employment in the service of the Crown. At the close of the preceding reign he was already connected with the Court, he had secured a seat in Yorkshire for one of the Royal ministers, and was believed to be on the high road to a peerage. But the consciousness of political ability which spurred his ambition roused the jealousy of Buckingham; and the haughty pride of Wentworth was flung by repeated slights into an attitude of opposition, which his eloquence—grander in its sudden outbursts, though less earnest and sustained, than that of Eliot—soon rendered formidable. But his patriotism was still little more than hostility to the favourite, and his intrigues at Court roused Buckingham to crush, by a signal insult, the rival whose genius he instinctively dreaded. While sitting in his court as sheriff of Yorkshire, Wentworth received the announcement of his dismissal from office, and of the gift of his post to Sir John Savile, his rival in the county. "Since they will thus weakly breathe on me a seeming disgrace in the public face of my country," he said with a characteristic outburst of contemptuous pride, "I shall crave leave to wipe it away as openly, as easily!" He sprang at once to the front of the Commons in urging the Petition of Right. Whether in that crisis of Wentworth's life some nobler impulse, some true passion for the freedom he was to betray mingled with his thirst for revenge, it is hard to tell. But his words were words of fire. "If he did not faithfully insist for the common liberty of the subject to be preserved whole and entire," it was thus he closed one of his speeches on the Petition, "it was his desire that he might be set as a beacon on a hill for all men else to wonder at."

It is as such a beacon that his name has stood from that time to this. The death of Buckingham had no sooner removed the obstacle that stood between his ambition and the end at which it had aimed throughout, than the cloak of patriotism was flung by. Wentworth was admitted to the Royal Council, and as he took his seat at the board he promised to "vindicate the Monarchy for ever from the conditions and restraints of subjects." So great was the faith in his zeal and power which he knew how to breathe into his Royal master, that he was at once raised to the peerage, and rewarded with the high post of Lord President of the North. Charles had good ground for this rapid confidence in his new minister. In Wentworth, or as we may call him from the title he assumed at the close of his life, in the Earl of Strafford, the very genius of tyranny was embodied. He was far too clear-sighted to share his master's belief that the arbitrary power which Charles was wielding formed any part of the old con-

Digitized by Google

stitution of the country, or to believe that the mere lapse of time would so change the temper of Englishmen as to reconcile them to despotism. He knew that absolute rule was a new thing in England, and that the only way of permanently establishing it was not by reasoning, or by the force of custom, but by the force of fear. His system was the expression of his own inner temper; and the dark gloomy countenance, the full heavy eye, which meet us in Strafford's portrait are the best commentary on his policy of "Thorough." It was by the sheer strength of his genius, by the terror his violence inspired amid the meaner men whom Buckingham had left, by the general sense of his power, that he had forced himself upon the Court. He had none of the small arts of a courtier. His air was that of a silent, proud, passionate man; when he first appeared at Whitehall his rough uncourtly manners provoked a smile in the Royal circle, but the smile soon died into a general hate. The Queen, frivolous and meddlesome as she was, detested him; his fellow-ministers intrigued against him, and seized on his hot speeches against the great lords, his quarrels with the Royal household, his transports of passion at the very Council-table, to ruin him in his master's favour. The King himself, while steadily supporting him against his rivals, was utterly unable to understand his drift. Charles valued him as an administrator, disdainful of private ends, crushing great and small with the same haughty indifference to men's love or hate, and devoted to the one aim of building up the power of the Crown. But in his purpose of preparing for the great struggle with freedom which he saw before him, of building up by force such a despotism in England as Richelieu was building up in France, and of thus making England as great in Europe as France had been made by Richelieu, he could look for little sympathy and less help from the King.

**Wentworth in Ireland.**

Wentworth's genius turned impatiently to a sphere where it could act alone, untrammelled by the hindrances it encountered at home. His purpose was to prepare for the coming contest by the provision of a fixed revenue, arsenals, fortresses, and a standing army, and it was in Ireland that he resolved to find them. He saw in the miserable country which had hitherto been a drain upon the resources of the Crown the lever he needed for the overthrow of English freedom. It was easy by the balance of Catholic against Protestant to make both parties dependent on the Royal authority; the rights of conquest, which in Strafford's theory vested the whole land in the absolute possession of the Crown, gave him a large field for his administrative ability; and for the rest he trusted, and trusted justly, to the force of his genius and of his will. In a few years after his appointment as Lord Lieutenant, his aim seemed all but realized. "The King," he wrote to Laud, "is as absolute here as any prince in the world can be." Wentworth's government indeed was a mere rule of terror. Archbishop

1633.

Digitized by Google

SEC. V.
THE TYRANNY.
1629-1640.

Usher, with almost every name which we can respect in the island, was the object of his insult and oppression. His tyranny strode over all legal bounds. A few insolent words, construed as mutiny, were enough to bring Lord Mountnorris before a council of war, and to inflict on him a sentence of death. In one instance Wentworth stooped to use his power for the basest personal ends: an adulterous passion for the Chancellor's daughter-in-law led him to order that peer to settle his estate in her favour, and, on his refusal, to deprive him of office. But such instances were rare. His tyranny aimed at public ends, and in Ireland the heavy hand of a single despot delivered the mass of the people at any rate from the local despotism of a hundred masters. The Irish landowners were for the first time made to feel themselves amenable to the law. Justice was enforced, outrage was repressed, the condition of the clergy was to some extent raised, the sea was cleared of the pirates who infested it. The foundation of the linen manufacture which was to bring wealth to Ulster, and the first development of Irish commerce, date from the Lieutenancy of Wentworth. But good government was only a means with him for further ends. The noblest work to be done in Ireland was the bringing about a reconciliation between Catholic and Protestant, and an obliteration of the anger and thirst for vengeance which had been raised by the Ulster Plantation. Strafford, on the other hand, angered the Protestants by a toleration of Catholic worship and a suspension of the persecution which had feebly begun against the priesthood, while he fed the irritation of the Catholics by schemes for a Plantation of Connaught. His whole aim was to encourage a disunion which left both parties dependent for support and protection on the Crown. It was a policy which was to end in bringing about the horrors of the Irish Massacre, the vengeance of Cromwell, and the long series of atrocities on both sides which make the story of the country he ruined so terrible to tell. But for the hour it left Ireland helpless in his hands. He had doubled the revenue. He had raised an army. He felt himself strong enough at last, in spite of the panic with which Charles heard his project, to summon an Irish Parliament. His aim was to read a lesson to England and the King, by showing how completely that dreaded thing, a Parliament, could be made the organ of the Royal will; and his success was complete. Two-thirds, indeed, of an Irish House of Commons consisted of the representatives of wretched villages, the pocket-boroughs of the Crown; while absent peers were forced to send in their proxies to the Council to be used at its pleasure. But precautions were hardly needed. The two Houses trembled at the stern master who bade their members not let the King "find them muttering, or, to speak it more truly, mutinying in corners," and voted with a perfect docility the means of maintaining an army of five thousand foot and five hundred horse. Even had the subsidy been refused, the result would have been the same. "I would undertake,"

Digitized by Google

wrote Strafford, "upon the peril of my head, to make the King's army able to subsist and to provide for itself among them without their help."

While Strafford was thus working out his system of "Thorough" on one side of St. George's Channel, it was being carried out on the other by a mind inferior, indeed, to his own in genius, but almost equal to it in courage and tenacity. On the death of Weston, Laud became virtually first minister of the Crown at the English Council-board. We have already seen with what a reckless and unscrupulous activity he was crushing Puritanism in the English Church, and driving Puritan ministers from English pulpits; and in this work his new position enabled him to back the authority of the High Commission by the terrors of the Star Chamber. It was a work, indeed, which to Laud's mind was at once civil and religious: he had allied the cause of ecclesiastical dogmatism with that of absolutism in the State; and, while borrowing the power of the Crown to crush ecclesiastical liberty, he brought the influence of the Church to bear on the ruin of civil freedom. But his power stopped at the Scotch frontier. Across the Border stood a Church without a bishop, without a ritual, modelled on the doctrine and system of Geneva, Calvinist in teaching and in government. The mere existence of such a Church gave countenance to English Puritanism, and threatened in any hour of ecclesiastical weakness to bring a Presbyterian influence to bear on the Church of England. With Scotland, indeed, Laud could only deal indirectly through Charles, for the King was jealous of any interference of his English ministers or Parliament with his Northern Kingdom. But Charles was himself earnest to deal with it. He had imbibed his father's hatred of the Presbyterian system, and from the outset of his reign he had been making advance after advance towards the re-establishment of Episcopacy. To understand, however, what had been done, and the relations which had by this time grown up between Scotland and its King, we must take up again the brief thread of its history which we broke at the moment when Mary fled for refuge over the English border.

1635

After a few years of wise and able rule, the triumph of Protestantism under the Earl of Murray had been interrupted by his assassination, by the revival of the Queen's faction, and by the renewal of civil war. The reaction, however, was a brief one, and the general horror excited by the Massacre of St. Bartholomew completed the ruin of the Catholic cause. Edinburgh, the last fortress held in Mary's name, surrendered to an English force sent by Elizabeth; and its captain, the chivalrous Kirkcaldy of Grange, was hung for treason at the market-cross. The people of the Lowlands, indeed, were now stanch for the new faith; and the Protestant Church rose rapidly after the death of Knox into a power which appealed at every critical juncture to the deeper feelings of the nation at large. In the battle with Catholicism

1570.

Digitized by Google

the bishops had clung to the old religion; and the new faith, left without episcopal interference, and influenced by the Genevan training of Knox, borrowed from Calvin its model of Church government, as it borrowed its theology. The system of Presbyterianism, as it grew up at the outset without direct recognition from the law, bound Scotland together by its administrative organization, its church synods and general assemblies, while it called the people at large, by the power it conferred upon the lay elders in each congregation, to a voice, and, as it proved, a decisive voice, in the administration of affairs. Its government by ministers gave it the look of an ecclesiastical despotism, but no Church constitution has proved in practice so democratic as that of Scotland. Its influence in raising the nation at large to a consciousness of its own power is shown by the change which passes, from the moment of its final establishment, over the face of Scotch history. The country ceases to belong to the great nobles, who had turned it into their battle ground ever since the death of Bruce. After the
1581. death of the Earl of Morton, who had put an end to the civil war, and ruled the country for five years with a wise and steady hand, the possession of the young sovereign, James the Sixth, was disputed indeed by one noble and another; but the power of the Church was felt more and more over nobles and King. Melville, who had succeeded to much of Knox's authority, claimed for the ecclesiastical body an independence of the State which James hardly dared to resent; while he writhed helplessly beneath the sway which public opinion, expressed through the General Assembly of the Church, exercised over the civil government. In the great crisis of the Armada his hands were fettered by the league with England which it forced upon him. The democratic boldness of Calvinism allied itself with the spiritual pride of the Presbyterian ministers in their dealings with the Crown. Melville in open Council took James by the sleeve, and called him "God's silly vassal!" "There are two Kings," he told him, when James extolled his Royal authority, "and two kingdoms in Scotland. There is Christ Jesus the King, and His Kingdom the Kirk, whose subject King James the Sixth is, and of whose kingdom not a king, nor a lord, nor a head, but a member." The words and tone of the great preacher were bitterly remembered when James mounted the English throne. "A Scottish Presbytery," he said at the Hampton Court Conference, "as well fitteth with Monarchy as God and the Devil! No Bishop, no King!" But Scotland was resolved on "no bishop." Episcopacy had become identified among the more zealous Scotchmen with the old Catholicism they had shaken off. When he appeared at a later time before the English Council-table, Melville took the Archbishop of Canterbury by the sleeves of his rochet, and, shaking them in his manner, called them Romish rags, and the mark of the Beast. Four years, therefore,
1592. after the ruin of the Armada, Episcopacy was formally abolished, and

Digitized by Google

the Presbyterian system established by law as the mode of government of the Church of Scotland. The rule of the Church was placed in a General Assembly, with subordinate Provincial Synods, Presbyteries, and Kirk Sessions, by which its discipline was carried down to every member of a congregation. As yet, however, the authority of the Assembly was hardly felt north of the Tay, while the system of Presbytery had by no means won the hold it afterwards gained over the people, even to the south of that river; and James had no sooner succeeded to the English throne than he used his new power in a struggle to undo the work which had been done. Melville, after his scornful protest at the Council-table, was banished from Scotland, and died in exile at Sedan. The old sees were restored, and three of the new bishops were consecrated in England, and returned to communicate the gift of Apostolical succession to their colleagues. But Episcopacy remained simply a name. The Presbyterian organization remained untouched in doctrine or discipline. All that James could do was to set his prelates to preside as permanent moderators in the provincial synods, and to prevent the Assembly from meeting without a summons from the Crown. The struggle, however, went on throughout his reign with varying success. An attempt to vest the government of the Church in the King and Bishops was foiled by the protest of the Presbyterian party; but a General Assembly, gathered at Perth, was induced to adopt some of the ecclesiastical practices most distasteful to them. The earlier policy of Charles, though it followed his father's line of action, effected little save a partial restoration of Church-lands, which the lords were forced to surrender. But Laud had no sooner become minister than his vigorous action made itself felt. The King's first acts were directed rather to points of outer observance than to any attack on the actual fabric of Presbyterian organization. The Estates were induced to withdraw the control of ecclesiastical apparel from the Assembly, and to commit it to the Crown; a step soon followed by a resumption of their episcopal costume on the part of the Scotch bishops. When the Bishop of Moray preached before Charles in his rochet, on the King's visit to Edinburgh, it was the first instance of its use since the Reformation. The innovation was followed by the issue of a Royal warrant which directed all ministers to use the surplice in divine worship. From costume, however, the busy minister soon passed to weightier matters. Many years had gone by since he had vainly invited James to draw his Scotch "subjects to a nearer conjunction with the liturgy and canons of this nation." "I sent him back again," said the shrewd old King, "with the frivolous draft he had drawn. For all that, he feared not my anger, but assaulted me again with another ill-fangled platform to make that stubborn Kirk stoop more to the English platform, but I durst not play fast and loose with my word. He knows not the stomach of that people." But Laud

1610.

1633.

Digitized by Google

SEC. V.
THE TYRANNY.
1629–1640.

had known how to wait, and his time had come at last. A new diocese, that of Edinburgh, was created, and the Archbishop of St. Andrews was named chancellor of the realm. A book of Canons, issued by the sole authority of the King, ignored Assembly and Kirk Session, and practically abolished the whole Presbyterian system. As daring a stretch of the prerogative superseded what was known as Knox's Liturgy—the book of Common Order drawn up on the Genevan model by that Reformer, and generally used throughout Scotland—by a new Liturgy based on the English Book of Common Prayer. The Liturgy and Canons had been Laud's own handiwork; in their composition the General Assembly had neither been consulted nor recognized, and to enforce them on Scotland was to effect an ecclesiastical revolution of the most serious kind. The books, however, were backed by a Royal Injunction, and Laud flattered himself that the revolution had been wrought.

1636.

Milton's Early Poems.

Triumphant in Scotland, with Scotch Presbyterianism—as he fancied—at his feet, Laud's hand fell heavier than ever on the English Puritans. There were signs of a change of temper which might have made even a bolder man pause. Thousands, as we have seen, of "the best" scholars, merchants, lawyers, farmers, were flying over the Atlantic to seek freedom and purity of religion in the wilderness. Great landowners and nobles were preparing to follow. Hundreds of ministers had quitted their parsonages rather than abet the Royal insult to the sanctity of the Sabbath. The Puritans who remained among the clergy were giving up their homes rather than consent to the change of the Sacred table into an altar, or to silence in their protests against the new Popery. The noblest of living Englishmen refused to become the priest of a Church whose ministry could only be "bought with servitude and forspeaking." We have seen John Milton leave Cambridge, self-dedicated "to that same lot, however mean or high, to which time leads me and the will of Heaven." But the lot to which these called him was not the ministerial office to which he had been destined from his childhood. In later life he told bitterly the story, how he had been "Church-outed by the prelates." "Coming to some maturity of years, and perceiving what tyranny had invaded in the Church, that he who would take orders must subscribe slave, and take an oath withal, which unless he took with a conscience that would retch he must either straight perjure or split his faith, I thought it better to prefer a blameless silence before the sacred office of speaking, bought and begun with servitude and forswearing." In spite therefore of his father's regrets, he retired to a new home which the scrivener had found at Horton, a village in the neighbourhood of Windsor, and quietly busied himself with study and poetry. The poetic impulse of the Renascence had been slowly dying away under the Stuarts. The stage was falling into mere coarse-

Digitized by Google

ness and horror; Shakspere had died quietly at Stratford in Milton's childhood; the last and worst play of Ben Jonson appeared in the year of his settlement at Horton; and though Ford and Massinger still lingered on, there were no successors for them but Shirley and Davenant. The philosophic and meditative taste of the age had produced indeed poetic schools of its own: poetic satire had become fashionable in Hall, better known afterwards as a bishop, and had been carried on vigorously by George Wither; the so-called "metaphysical" poetry, the vigorous and pithy expression of a cold and prosaic good sense began with Sir John Davies, and buried itself in fantastic affectations in Donne; religious verse had become popular in the gloomy allegories of Quarles and the tender refinement which struggles through a jungle of puns and extravagances in George Herbert. But what poetic life really remained was to be found only in the caressing fancy and lively badinage of lyric singers like Herrick, whose grace is untouched by passion and often disfigured by coarseness, and pedantry; or in the school of Spenser's more direct successors where Brown, in his pastorals, and the two Fletchers, Phineas and Giles, in their unreadable allegories, still preserved something of their master's sweetness, if they preserved nothing of his power. Milton was himself a Spenserian; he owned to Dryden in later years that "Spenser was his original," and in some of his earliest lines at Horton he dwells lovingly on "the sage and solemn tunes" of the "Faerie Queen," its "forests and enchantments drear, where more is meant than meets the ear." But of the weakness and affectation which characterized Spenser's successors he had not a trace. In the "Allegro" and "Penseroso," the first results of his retirement at Horton, we catch again the fancy and melody of the Elizabethan verse, the wealth of its imagery, its wide sympathy with nature and man. There is a loss, perhaps, of the older freedom and spontaneity of the Renascence, a rhetorical rather than passionate turn in the young poet, a striking absence of dramatic power, and a want of precision and exactness even in his picturesque touches. Milton's imagination is not strong enough to identify him with the world which he imagines; he stands apart from it, and looks at it as from a distance, ordering it and arranging it at his will. But if in this respect he falls, both in his earlier and later poems, far below Shakspere or Spenser, the deficiency is all but compensated by his nobleness of feeling and expression, the severity of his taste, his sustained dignity, and the perfectness and completeness of his work. The moral grandeur of the Puritan breathes, even in these lighter pieces of his youth, through every line. The "Comus," planned as a masque for the festivities which the Earl of Bridgewater was holding at Ludlow Castle, rises into an almost impassioned pleading for the love of virtue. 1633.

The historic interest of Milton's "Comus," lies in its forming part of

Digitized by Google

**Hampden and Ship-money.**

a protest made by the more cultured Puritans at this time against the gloomier bigotry which persecution was fostering in the party at large. The patience of Englishmen, in fact, was slowly wearing out. There was a sudden upgrowth of virulent pamphlets of the old Martin Marprelate type. Men, whose names no one asked, hawked libels, whose authorship no one knew, from the door of the tradesman to the door of the squire. As the hopes of a Parliament grew fainter, and men despaired of any legal remedy, violent and weak-headed fanatics came, as at such times they always come, to the front. Leighton, the father of the saintly Archbishop of that name, had given a specimen of their tone at the outset of this period, by denouncing the prelates as men of blood, Episcopacy as Antichrist, and the Popish queen as a daughter of Heth.

1633. The "Histrio-mastrix" of Prynne, a lawyer distinguished for his constitutional knowledge, but the most obstinate and narrow-minded of men, marked the deepening of Puritan bigotry under the fostering warmth of Laud's persecution. The book was an attack on players as the ministers of Satan, on theatres as the Devil's chapels, on hunting, maypoles, the decking of houses at Christmas with evergreens, on cards, music, and false hair. The attack on the stage was as offensive to the more cultured minds among the Puritan party as to the Court itself; Selden and Whitelock took a prominent part in preparing the grand masque by which the Inns of Court resolved to answer its challenge, and in the following year Milton wrote his masque of "Comus," for Ludlow Castle. To leave Prynne, however, simply to the censure of wiser men than himself was too sensible a course for the angry Primate. No man was ever sent to prison before or since for such a sheer mass of nonsense; but the prison with which Laud rewarded Prynne's enormous folio tamed his spirit so little that a new tract written within its walls attacked the bishops as devouring wolves and lords of Lucifer. A fellow-prisoner, John Bastwick, declared in his "Litany" that "Hell was broke loose, and the Devils in surplices, hoods, copes, and rochets, were come among us." Burton, a London clergyman silenced by the High Commission, called on all Christians to resist the bishops as "robbers of souls, limbs of the Beast, and factors of Antichrist." Raving of this sort, however, though it showed how fast the storm of popular passion was gathering, was not so pressing a difficulty to the Royal ministers at this time as the old difficulty of the Exchequer. The ingenious devices of the Court lawyers, the revived prerogatives, the illegal customs, the fines and confiscations which were alienating one class after another and sowing in home after home the seeds of a bitter hatred to the Crown, had failed to recruit the Treasury. In spite of the severe economy of Charles and his ministers new exactions were necessary, at a time when the rising discontent made every new exaction a challenge to revolt. But danger and difficulty were lost on the temper of the two men who really governed

Digitized by Google

England. To Laud and Strafford, indeed, the King seemed over-cautious, the Star Chamber feeble, the Judges over-scrupulous. "I am for Thorough," the one writes to the other in alternate fits of impatience at the slow progress they are making. Strafford was anxious that his good work might not "be spoiled on that side." Laud echoed the wish, while he envied the free course of the Lord Lieutenant. "You have a good deal of humour here," he writes, "for your proceeding. Go on a' God's name. I have done with expecting of Thorough on this side." The financial pressure was seized by both to force the King on to a bolder course. "The debt of the Crown being taken off," Strafford urged, "you may govern at your will." All pretence of precedents was thrown aside, and Laud resolved to find a permanent revenue in the conversion of the "ship-money" levied on ports and the maritime counties into a general tax imposed by the Royal will upon the whole country. The sum expected from the tax was no less than a quarter of a million a year. "I know no reason," Strafford had written significantly, "but you may as well rule the common lawyers in England as I, poor beagle, do here;" and a bench of Judges, remodelled on his hint for the occasion, no sooner declared the new impost to be legal than he drew the logical deduction from their decision. "Since it is lawful for the King to impose a tax for the equipment of the navy, it must be equally so for the levy of an army: and the same reason which authorizes him to levy an army to resist, will authorize him to carry that army abroad that he may prevent invasion. Moreover what is law in England is law also in Scotland and Ireland. The decision of the judges will therefore make the King absolute at home and formidable abroad. Let him only abstain from war for a few years that he may habituate his subjects to the payment of that tax, and in the end he will find himself more powerful and respected than any of his predecessors." But there were men who saw the danger to freedom in this levy of ship-money as clearly as Strafford himself. John Hampden, a friend of Eliot's, a man of consummate ability, of unequalled power of persuasion, of a keen intelligence, ripe learning, and a character singularly pure and loveable, had already shown the firmness of his temper in his refusal to contribute to the forced loan of 1626. He now repeated his refusal, declared ship-money an illegal impost, and resolved to rouse the spirit of the country by an appeal for protection to the law.

**The Resistance.**

The news of Hampden's resistance thrilled through England at the very moment when men were roused by the news of resistance in the north. The submission with which Scotland had bent to aggression after aggression found an end at last. The Dean of Edinburgh had no sooner opened the new Prayer Book than a murmur ran through the congregation, and a stool hurled from among the crowd felled him to the ground. The Church was cleared, the service read, but the

*July*, 1637.



Digitized by Google

SEC. V. THE TYRANNY. 1629-1640.

rising discontent frightened the judges into a decision that the Royal writ enjoined the purchase, and not the use, of the Prayer Book. Its use was at once discontinued, and the angry orders which came from England for its restoration were met by a shower of protests from every part of Scotland. The Duke of Lennox alone took sixty-eight petitions with him to the Court; while ministers, nobles, and gentry poured into Edinburgh to organize the national resistance. The effect of these events in Scotland was at once seen in the open demonstration of discontent south of the border. Prynne and his fellow pamphleteers, when Laud dragged them before the Star Chamber as "trumpets of sedition," listened with defiance to their sentence of exposure in the pillory and imprisonment for life; and the crowd who filled Palace Yard to witness their punishment groaned at the cutting off of their ears, and "gave a great shout" when Prynne urged that the sentence on him was contrary to the law. A hundred thousand Londoners lined the road as they passed on the way to prison; and the journey of these "Martyrs," as the spectators called them, was like a triumphal progress. Startled as he was at the sudden burst of popular feeling, Laud was dauntless as ever; and Prynne's entertainers, as he passed through the country, were summoned before the Star Chamber, while the censorship struck fiercer blows at the Puritan press. But the real danger lay not in the libels of silly zealots but in the attitude of Scotland, and in the effect which was being produced in England at large by the trial of Hampden. For twelve days the cause of ship-money was solemnly argued before the full bench of Judges. It was proved that the tax in past times had been levied only in cases of sudden emergency, and confined to the coast and port towns alone, and that even the show of legality had been taken from it by formal Statute and by the Petition of Right. The case was adjourned, but the discussion told not merely on England but on the temper of the Scots. Charles had replied to their petitions by a simple order to all strangers to leave the capital. But the Council was unable to enforce his order; and the nobles and gentry before dispersing to their homes named a body of delegates, under the odd title of "the Tables," who carried on through the winter a series of negotiations with the Crown. The negotiations were interrupted in the following spring by a renewed order for their dispersion, and for the acceptance of a Prayer Book; while the judges in England delivered at last their long-delayed decision on Hampden's case. All save two laid down the broad principle that no Statute prohibiting arbitrary taxation could be pleaded against the King's will. "I never read or heard," said Judge Berkley, "that lex was rex, but it is common and most true that rex is lex." Finch, the Chief-Justice, summed up the opinions of his fellow judges. "Acts of Parliament to take away the King's Royal power in the defence of his kingdom are void," he said: "they are

*Nov.* 1637.

1638.

Digitized by Google

void Acts of Parliament to bind the King not to command the subjects, their persons, and goods, and I say their money too, for no Acts of Parliament made any difference."

"I wish Mr. Hampden and others to his likeness," the Lord Lieutenant wrote bitterly from Ireland, "were well whipt into their right senses." Amidst the exultation of the Court over the decision of the judges, Wentworth saw clearly that Hampden's work had been done. His resistance had roused England to a sense of the danger to her freedom, and forced into light the real character of the Royal claims. How stern and bitter the temper even of the noblest Puritans had become at last we see in the poem which Milton produced at this time, his elegy of "Lycidas." Its grave and tender lament is broken by a sudden flash of indignation at the dangers around the Church, at the "blind mouths that scarce themselves know how to hold a sheep-hook," and to whom "the hungry sheep look up, and are not fed," while "the grim wolf" of Rome "with privy paw daily devours apace, and nothing said!" The stern resolve of the people to demand justice on their tyrants spoke in his threat of the axe. Strafford and Laud, and Charles himself, had yet to reckon with "that two-handed engine at the door" which stood "ready to smite once, and smite no more." But stern as was the general resolve, there was no need for immediate action, for the difficulties which were gathering in the north were certain to bring a strain on the Government which would force it to seek support from the people. The King's demand for immediate submission, which reached Edinburgh with the significant comment of the Hampden judgment, at once gathered the whole body of remonstrants together round "the Tables" at Stirling; and a protestation, read at Edinburgh, was followed, on Archibald Johnston of Warriston's suggestion, by the renewal of the Covenant with God which had been drawn up and sworn to in a previous hour of peril, when Mary was still plotting against Protestantism, and Spain was preparing its Armada. "We promise and swear," ran the solemn engagement at its close, "by the great name of the Lord our God, to continue in the profession and obedience of the said Religion, and that we shall defend the same, and resist all their contrary errors and corruptions, according to our vocation and the utmost of that power which God has put into our hands all the days of our life." The Covenant was signed in the churchyard of the Grey Friars at Edinburgh, in a tumult of enthusiasm, "with such content and joy as those who, having long before been outlaws and rebels, are admitted again into covenant with God." Gentlemen and nobles rode with the documents in their pockets over the country, gathering subscriptions to it, while the ministers pressed for a general consent to it from the pulpit. But pressure was needless. "Such was the zeal of subscribers that for a while many subscribed with tears on their cheeks;" some were



Digitized by Google

SEC. V. THE TYRANNY. 1629-1640.

indeed reputed to have "drawn their own blood and used it in place of ink to underwrite their names." The force given to Scottish freedom by this revival of religious fervour was seen in the new tone adopted by the Covenanters. The Marquis of Hamilton, who had come as Royal Commissioner to put an end to the quarrel, was at once met by demands for an abolition of the Court of High Commission, the withdrawal of the Books of Canons and Common Prayer, a free Parliament, and a free General Assembly. It was in vain that he threatened war; even the Council pressed Charles to give fuller satisfaction to the people. "I will rather die," the King wrote to Hamilton, "than yield to these impertinent and damnable demands;" but it was needful to gain time. "The discontents at home," wrote Lord Northumberland to Strafford, "do rather increase than lessen:" and Charles was without money or men. It was in vain that he begged for a loan from Spain on promise of declaring war against Holland, or that he tried to procure ten thousand troops from Flanders who might be useful in England after their victory over Scottish freedom. The loan and troops were both refused, and the contributions offered by the English Catholics did little to recruit the Exchequer. Charles had directed the Marquis to delay any decisive breach till the Royal fleet appeared in the Forth; but it was hard to equip a fleet at all. Scotland indeed was sooner ready for war than the King. The volunteers who had been serving in the Thirty Years' War streamed home at the call of their brethren. General Leslie, a veteran trained under Gustavus, came from Sweden to take the command of the new forces. A voluntary war tax was levied in every shire. The danger at last forced the King to yield to the Scotch demands; but he had no sooner yielded than the concession was withdrawn, and the Assembly hardly met before it was called upon to disperse. The order however was disregarded till it had abolished the innovations in worship and discipline, deposed the bishops, and formally set the Presbyterian Church courts up again. The news that Charles was gathering an army at York, and reckoning for support on the clans of the north, was answered by the seizure of Edinburgh, Dumbarton, and Stirling; while ten thousand well-equipped troops under Leslie and the Earl of Montrose seized Aberdeen, and brought the Catholic Earl of Huntly a prisoner to the south. Instead of overawing the country, the appearance of the Royal fleet in the Forth was the signal for Leslie's march on the Border. Charles had hardly pushed across the Tweed, when the "old little crooked soldier," encamping on the hill of Dunse Law, fairly offered him battle.

1639.

THE BISHOPS' WAR.

Charles however was not strong enough to fight, and the two armies returned home on his consent to the gathering of a free Assembly and Parliament. But the pacification at Berwick was a mere suspension of arms; the King's summons of Wentworth, now created Earl of Strafford, from Ireland was a proof that violent measures were in

Digitized by Google

preparation, and the Scots met the challenge by demands for the convocation of triennial Parliaments, for freedom of elections and of debate. Strafford counselled that they should be whipped back into their senses; and the discovery of a correspondence which was being carried on between some of the Covenanter leaders and the French Court raised hopes in the King that an appeal to the country for aid against "Scotch treason" would still find an answer in English loyalty. While Strafford hurried to Ireland to levy forces, Charles summoned what from its brief duration is known as the Short Parliament. The Houses met in a mood which gave hopes of an accommodation with the Crown, but all hope of bringing them into an attack on Scotland proved fruitless. The intercepted letters were quietly set aside, and the Commons declared as of old that redress of grievances must precede the grant of supplies. Even an offer to relinquish ship-money failed to draw Parliament from its resolve, and after three weeks' sitting it was roughly dissolved. "Things must go worse before they go better" was the cool comment of St. John, one of the patriot leaders. But the country was strangely moved. "So great a defection in the kingdom," wrote Lord Northumberland, "hath not been known in the memory of man." Strafford alone stood undaunted. He had returned from Ireland, where he had easily obtained money and men from his servile Parliament, to pour fresh vigour into the Royal counsels, and to urge that, by the refusal of the Parliament to supply the King's wants, Charles was freed from all rule of government, and entitled to supply himself at his will. The Earl was bent upon war, and took command of the Royal army, which again advanced to the north. But the Scots were already across the Border; forcing the passage of the Tyne in the face of an English detachment, they occupied Newcastle, and despatched from that town their proposals of peace. They prayed the King to consider their grievances, and, "with the advice and consent of the Estates of England convened in Parliament, to settle a firm and desirable peace." The prayer was backed by preparations for a march upon York, where Charles had already abandoned himself to despair. Behind him in fact England was all but in revolt. The London apprentices mobbed Laud at Lambeth, and broke up the sittings of the High Commission at St. Paul's. The war was denounced everywhere as "the Bishops' War," and the new levies murdered officers whom they suspected of Papistry, broke down altar-rails in every church they passed, and deserted to their homes. Even in the camp itself neither the threats nor prayers of Strafford could recall the troops to their duty, and he was forced to own that two months were required before they could be fit for the field. The success of the Scots emboldened two peers, Lord Wharton and Lord Howard, to present a petition for peace to the King himself; and though Strafford arrested

1640.

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE LONG PARLIAMENT. 1640–1644.

and proposed to shoot them, the Council shrank from desperate courses. The threat of a Scotch advance forced Charles at last to give way, and after endeavouring to evade the necessity of convoking a Parliament by summoning a "Great Council of the Peers" at York, the general repudiation of his project drove him to summon the Houses once more to Westminster.

### Section VI.—The Long Parliament: 1640–1644.

[*Authorities.*—Clarendon's "History of the Rebellion," as Hallam justly says, "belongs rather to the class of memoirs" than of histories. The strange contrast between the conduct of its author at the time and his later account of the Parliament's proceedings, as well as the deliberate and malignant falsehood with which he has perverted almost every fact, destroy his value as an authority during this earlier period, though his work will always retain a literary interest from its nobleness of style and the grand series of character-portraits which it embodies. May's "History of the Long Parliament" is, for this earlier time, accurate and fairly impartial. But the real bases of any account of it must be found in its own proceedings, as they are preserved in the Notes of Sir Ralph Verney (edited by Mr. Bruce), and Sir Symonds D'Ewes. On the latter of these Mr. Forster has based his history of "The Grand Remonstrance," with his subsequent work on "The Arrest of the Five Members," which may be taken as the best text-books for the period they cover. Rushworth's collection of State Papers is invaluable for any exact study of the times; that of his rival, Nalson, is untrustworthy, and of small importance. Both may be supplemented by the Clarendon and Hardwicke State Papers. Among the series of Memoirs which illustrate the whole period of the Rebellion we may as yet consult those of Whitelock, Ludlow, Warwick, Mrs. Hutchinson, and the "Life of Clarendon." For Irish affairs see Carte's "Life of Ormond," and the accompanying papers; for Scotch, Baillie's "Letters," and Mr. Burton's History. Lingard is useful for information as to intrigues with the Catholics in England and Ireland; and Guizot directs special attention to the relations with foreign powers. Pym has been fairly sketched with other statesmen of the time by Mr. Forster in his "Statesmen of the Commonwealth," and in an Essay on him by Mr. Goldwin Smith. A good deal of valuable research for the period in general is to be found in Mr. Sandford's "Illustrations of the Great Rebellion."]

**Pym.**

If Strafford embodied the spirit of tyranny, John Pym, the leader of the Commons from the first meeting of the new Houses at Westminster, stands out for all after time as the embodiment of law. A Somersetshire gentleman of good birth and competent fortune, he entered on public life in the Parliament of 1614, and was imprisoned for his patriotism at its close. He had been a leading member in that of 1620, and one of the "twelve ambassadors" for whom James ordered chairs to be set at Whitehall. Of the band of patriots with whom he had stood side by side in the constitutional struggle against the earlier despotism of Charles he was the sole survivor. Coke had died of old age; Cotton's heart was broken by oppression; Eliot had perished in the Tower; Wentworth had apostatized. Pym alone re-

Digitized by Google

mained, resolute, patient as of old; and as the sense of his greatness grew silently during the eleven years of deepening tyranny, the hope and faith of better things clung almost passionately to the man who never doubted of the final triumph of freedom and the law. At their close, Clarendon tells us, in words all the more notable for their bitter tone of hate, "he was the most popular man, and the most able to do hurt, that have lived at any time." He had shown he knew how to wait, and when waiting was over he showed he knew how to act. On the eve of the Long Parliament he rode through England to quicken the electors to a sense of the crisis which had come at last; and on the assembling of the Commons he took his place, not merely as member for Tavistock, but as their acknowledged head. Few of the country gentlemen, indeed, who formed the bulk of the members, had sat in any previous House; and of the few, none represented in so eminent a way the Parliamentary tradition on which the coming struggle was to turn. Pym's eloquence, inferior in boldness and originality to that of Eliot or Wentworth, was better suited by its massive and logical force to convince and guide a great party; and it was backed by a calmness of temper, a dexterity and order in the management of public business, and a practical power of shaping the course of debate, which gave a form and method to Parliamentary proceedings such as they had never had before. Valuable, however, as these qualities were, it was a yet higher quality which raised Pym into the greatest, as he was the first, of Parliamentary leaders. Of the five hundred members who sate round him at St. Stephen's, he was the one man who had clearly foreseen, and as clearly resolved how to meet, the difficulties which lay before them. It was certain that Parliament would be drawn into a struggle with the Crown. It was probable that in such a struggle the House of Commons would be hampered, as it had been hampered before, by the House of Lords. The legal antiquarians of the older constitutional school stood helpless before such a conflict of co-ordinate powers, a conflict for which no provision had been made by the law, and on which precedents threw only a doubtful and conflicting light. But with a knowledge of precedent as great as their own, Pym rose high above them in his grasp of constitutional principles. He was the first English statesman who discovered, and applied to the political circumstances around him, what may be called the doctrine of constitutional proportion. He saw that as an element of constitutional life Parliament was of higher value than the Crown; he saw, too, that in Parliament itself the one essential part was the House of Commons. On these two facts he based his whole policy in the contest which followed. When Charles refused to act with the Parliament, Pym treated the refusal as a temporary abdication on the part of the sovereign, which vested the executive power in the two Houses,

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE LONG PARLIAMENT. 1640-1644.

until new arrangements were made. When the Lords obstructed public business, he warned them that obstruction would only force the Commons "to save the kingdom alone." Revolutionary as these principles seemed at the time, they have both been recognized as bases of our constitution since the days of Pym. The first principle was established by the Convention and Parliament which followed on the departure of James the Second; the second by the acknowledgement on all sides since the Reform Bill of 1832 that the government of the country is really in the hands of the House of Commons, and can only be carried on by ministers who represent the majority of that House. Pym's temper, indeed, was the very opposite of the temper of a revolutionist. Few natures have ever been wider in their range of sympathy or action. Serious as his purpose was, his manners were genial, and even courtly: he turned easily from an invective against Strafford to a chat with Lady Carlisle; and the grace and gaiety of his social tone, even when the care and weight of public affairs were bringing him to his grave, gave rise to a hundred silly scandals among the prurient Royalists. It was this striking combination of genial versatility with a massive force in his nature which marked him out from the first moment of power as a born ruler of men. He proved himself at once the subtlest of diplomatists and the grandest of demagogues. He was equally at home in tracking the subtle intricacies of the Army Plot, or in kindling popular passion with words of fire. Though past middle life when his work really began, for he was born in 1584, four years before the coming of the Armada, he displayed from the first meeting of the Long Parliament the qualities of a great administrator, an immense faculty for labour, a genius for organization, patience, tact, a power of inspiring confidence in all whom he touched, calmness and moderation under good fortune or ill, an immovable courage, an iron will. No English ruler has ever shown greater nobleness of natural temper or a wider capacity for government than the Somersetshire squire whom his enemies, made clear-sighted by their hate, greeted truly enough as "King Pym."

**The work of the Parliament.**

His ride over England on the eve of the elections had been hardly needed, for the summons of a Parliament at once woke the kingdom to a fresh life. The Puritan emigration to New England was suddenly and utterly suspended; "the change," said Winthrop, "made all men to stay in England in expectation of a new world." The public discontent spoke from every Puritan pulpit, and expressed itself in a sudden burst of pamphlets, the first-fruits of the thirty thousand which were issued before the Restoration, and which turned England at large into a school of political discussion. The resolute looks of the members as they gathered at Westminster contrasted with the hesitating words of the King, and each brought from borough or county a petition of griev-

*Nov.* 1640.

Digitized by Google

ances. Fresh petitions were brought every day by bands of citizens or farmers. Forty committees were appointed to examine and report on them, and their reports formed the grounds on which the Commons acted. One by one the illegal acts of the Tyranny were annulled. Prynne and his fellow "martyrs," recalled from their prisons, entered London in triumph amidst the shouts of a great multitude who strewed laurel in their path. The civil and criminal jurisdiction of the Privy Council, the Star Chamber, the court of High Commission, the irregular jurisdictions of the Council of the North, of the Duchy of Lancaster, the County of Chester, and a crowd of lesser tribunals were summarily abolished. Ship-money was declared illegal, and the judgment in Hampden's case annulled. A statute declaring "the ancient right of the subjects of this kingdom that no subsidy, custom, import, or any charge whatsoever, ought or may be laid or imposed upon any merchandize exported or imported by subjects, denizens, or aliens, without common consent in Parliament," put an end for ever to all pretensions to a right of arbitrary taxation on the part of the Crown. A Triennial Bill enforced the assembly of the Houses every three years and bound the sheriffs and citizens to proceed to election if the Royal writ failed to summon them. Charles protested, but gave way. He was forced to look helplessly on at the wreck of his Tyranny, for the Scotch army was still encamped in the north; and the Parliament, which saw in the presence of the Scots a security against its own dissolution, was in no hurry to vote the money necessary for their withdrawal. "We cannot do without them," Strode honestly confessed, "the Philistines are still too strong for us." Meanwhile the Commons were dealing roughly with the agents of the Royal system. In every county a list of the Royal officers, under the name of "delinquents," was ordered to be prepared and laid before the Houses. Windebank, the Secretary of State, with the Chancellor, Finch, fled in terror over sea. Laud himself was flung into prison. The shadow perhaps of what was to come falls across the pages of his Diary, and softens the hard temper of the man into a strange tenderness. "I stayed at Lambeth till the evening," writes the Archbishop, "to avoid the gaze of the people. I went to evening prayer in my chapel. The Psalms of the day, and chapter fifty of Isaiah, gave me great comfort. God make me worthy of it and fit to receive it. As I went to my barge hundreds of my poor neighbours stood there, and prayed for my safety and return to my house. For which I bless God and them."

**The Death of Strafford.**

But even Laud, hateful as he was to all but the poor neighbours whose prayers his alms had won, was not the centre of so great and universal a hatred as the Earl of Strafford. Strafford's guilt was more than the guilt of a servile instrument of tyranny, it was the guilt of "that grand apostate to the Commonwealth who," in the terrible words which closed Lord Digby's invective, "must not expect

Digitized by Google

to be pardoned in this world till he be despatched to the other." He was conscious of his danger, but Charles forced him to attend the Court; and with characteristic boldness he resolved to anticipate attack by charging the Parliamentary leaders with a treasonable correspondence with the Scots. He was just laying his scheme before Charles when the news reached him that Pym was at the bar of the Lords with his impeachment for High Treason. "With speed," writes an eye-witness, "he comes to the House: he calls rudely at the door," and, "with a proud glooming look, makes towards his place at the board-head. But at once many bid him void the House, so he is forced in confusion to go to the door till he was called." He was only recalled to hear his committal to the Tower. He was still resolute to retort the charge of treason on his foes, and "offered to speak, but was commanded to be gone without a word." The keeper of the Black rod demanded his sword as he took him in charge. "This done, he makes through a number of people towards his coach, no man capping to him, before whom that morning the greatest of all England would have stood uncovered." The effect of the blow was seen in the cessation on the King's part of his old tone of command, and in the attempt he made to construct a ministry from among the patriots, with Lord Bedford at their head, on condition that Strafford's life should be spared. But the price was too high to pay; the negotiations were interrupted by Bedford's death, and by the discovery that Charles had been listening all the while to a knot of adventurers who proposed to bring about his end by stirring the army to an attack on the Parliament. The discovery of the Army Plot sealed Strafford's fate. The trial of his Impeachment began in Westminster Hall, and the whole of the House of Commons appeared to support it. The passion which the cause excited was seen in the loud cries of sympathy or hatred which burst from the crowded benches on either side. For fifteen days Strafford struggled with a remarkable courage and ingenuity against the list of charges, and he had melted his audience to tears by the pathos of his defence when the trial was suddenly interrupted. Though tyranny and misgovernment had been conclusively proved against him, the technical proof of treason was weak. "The law of England," to use Hallam's words, "is silent as to conspiracies against itself," and treason by the Statute of Edward the Third was restricted to a levying of war against the King or a compassing of his death. The Commons endeavoured to strengthen their case by bringing forward the notes of a meeting of the Council in which Strafford had urged the use of his Irish troops "to reduce this kingdom to obedience;" but the words were still technically doubtful, and the Lords would only admit the evidence on condition of wholly reopening the case. Pym and Hampden remained convinced of the sufficiency of the impeachment; but the House broke loose from their

Digitized by Google

control, and, guided by St. John and Lord Falkland, resolved to abandon these judicial proceedings, and fall back on the resource of a Bill of Attainder. Their course has been bitterly censured by some whose opinion in such a matter is entitled to respect. But the crime of Strafford was none the less a crime that it did not fall within the scope of the Statute of Treasons. It is impossible indeed to provide for some of the greatest dangers which can happen to national freedom by any formal statute. Even now a minister might avail himself of the temper of a Parliament elected in some moment of popular panic, and, though the nation returned to its senses, might simply by refusing to appeal to the country govern in defiance of its will. Such a course would be technically legal, but such a minister would be none the less a criminal. Strafford's course, whether it fell within the Statute of Treasons or no, was from beginning to end an attack on the freedom of the whole nation. In the last resort a nation retains the right of self-defence, and the Bill of Attainder is the assertion of such a right for the punishment of a public enemy who falls within the scope of no written law. The chance of the offender's escape roused the Londoners to frenzy, and crowds surrounded the Houses, with cries of "Justice," while the Lords passed the Bill. The Earl's one hope was in the King, but three days later the royal sanction was given, and he passed to his doom. Strafford died as he had lived. His friends warned him of the vast multitude gathered before the Tower to witness his fall. "I know how to look death in the face, and the people too," he answered proudly. "I thank God I am no more afraid of death, but as cheerfully put off my doublet at this time as ever I did when I went to bed." As the axe fell, the silence of the great multitude was broken by a universal shout of joy. The streets blazed with bonfires. The bells clashed out from every steeple. "Many," says an observer, "that came to town to see the execution rode in triumph back, waving their hats, and with all expressions of joy through every town they went, crying, 'His head is off! His head is off!'"

*May, 1641.*

**The Grand Remonstrance.**

Great as were the changes which had been wrought in the first six months of the Long Parliament, they had been based strictly on precedent, and had, in fact, been simply a restoration of the older English constitution as it existed at the close of the Wars of the Roses. But every day made it harder to remain quietly in this position. On the one hand, the air, since the army conspiracy, was full of rumours and panic; the creak of a few boards revived the memory of the Gunpowder Plot, and the members rushed out of the House of Commons in the full belief that it was undermined. On the other hand, Charles regarded his consent to the new measures as having been extorted by force, and to be retracted at the first opportunity. Both Houses, in their terror, swore to defend the Protestant religion and the public liberties, an oath which was subsequently exacted from every

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE LONG PARLIAMENT. 1640-1644.

one engaged in civil employment, and voluntarily taken by the great mass of the people. The same terror of a counter-revolution induced Hyde and the "moderate men" in the Commons to bring in a bill providing that the present Parliament should not be dissolved but by its own consent. Charles signed the Bill without protest, but he was already seeking aid from France, and preparing for the counter-revolution it was meant to meet. Hitherto, the Scotch army had held him down, but its payment and withdrawal could no longer be delayed, and it was no sooner on its way homeward than the King resolved to prevent its return. In spite of prayers from the Parliament he left London for Edinburgh, yielded to every demand of the Assembly and the Scotch Estates, attended the Presbyterian worship, lavished titles and favours on the Earl of Argyle and the patriot leaders, and gained for a few months a popularity which spread dismay in the English Parliament. Their dread of his designs was increased when he was found to have been intriguing all the while with the Earl of Montrose—who had seceded from the patriot party before his coming, and been rewarded for his secession with imprisonment in the castle of Edinburgh—and when Hamilton and Argyle withdrew suddenly from the capital, and charged the King with a treacherous plot to seize and carry them out of the realm. The popular fright was fanned to frenzy by news which came suddenly from Ireland, where the fall of Strafford had put an end to all semblance of rule. The disbanded soldiers of the army he had raised spread over the country, and stirred the smouldering disaffection into a flame. A conspiracy, organized with wonderful power and secrecy, burst forth in Ulster, where the confiscation of the Settlement had never been forgiven, and spread like wildfire over the centre and west of the island. Dublin was saved by a mere chance; but in the open country the work of murder went on unchecked. Fifty thousand English people perished in a few days, and rumour doubled and trebled the number. Tales of horror and outrage, such as maddened our own England when they reached us from Cawnpore, came day after day over the Irish Channel. Sworn depositions told how husbands were

*Oct.* 1641.

cut to pieces in presence of their wives, their children's brains dashed out before their faces, their daughters brutally violated and driven out naked to perish frozen in the woods. "Some," says May, "were burned on set purpose, others drowned for sport or pastime, and if they swam kept from landing with poles, or shot, or murdered in the water; many were buried quick, and some set into the earth breast-high and there left to famish." The new feature of the revolt, beside the massacre with which it opened, was its religious character. It was no longer a struggle, as of old, of Celt against Saxon, but of Catholic against Protestant. The Papists within the Pale joined hands in it with the wild kernes outside the Pale. The rebels called them-

Digitized by Google

selves "Confederate Catholics," resolved to defend "the public and free exercise of the true and Catholic Roman religion." The panic waxed greater when it was found that they claimed to be acting by the King's commission, and in aid of his authority. They professed to stand by Charles and his heirs against all that should "directly and indirectly endeavour to suppress their Royal prerogatives." They showed a Commission, purporting to have been issued by Royal command at Edinburgh, and styled themselves "the King's army." The Commission was a forgery, but belief in it was quickened by the want of all sympathy with the national honour which Charles displayed. To him the revolt seemed a useful check on his opponents. "I hope," he wrote coolly, when the news reached him, "this ill news of Ireland may hinder some of these follies in England." Above all, it would necessitate the raising of an army, and with an army at his command he would again be the master of the Parliament. The Parliament, on the other hand, saw in the Irish revolt the disclosure of a vast scheme for a counter-revolution, of which the withdrawal of the Scotch army, the reconciliation of Scotland, the intrigues at Edinburgh, the exultation of the royalists at the King's return, and the appearance of a royalist party in the House itself, were all parts. At the head of the new party stood Lord Falkland, a man learned and accomplished, the centre of a circle which embraced the most liberal thinkers of his day, a keen reasoner and able speaker, whose convictions still went with the Parliament, while his wavering and impulsive temper, his love of the Church, which was now being threatened, his passionate longings for peace, his sympathy for the fallen, led him to struggle for a King whom he distrusted, and to die in a cause that was not his own. Behind him clustered intriguers like Hyde, chivalrous soldiers like Sir Edmund Verney ("I have eaten the King's bread and served him now thirty years, and I will not do so base a thing as to distrust him"), men frightened at the rapid march of change, or by the dangers which threatened Episcopacy. With a broken Parliament, and perils gathering without, Pym resolved to appeal for aid to the nation itself. The Solemn Remonstrance which he laid before the House was a detailed narrative of the work which the Parliament had done, the difficulties it had surmounted, and the new dangers which lay in its path. The Parliament had been charged with a design to abolish Episcopacy, it declared its purpose to be simply that of reducing the power of Bishops. Politically it repudiated the taunt of revolutionary aims. It demanded only the observance of the existing laws against Papistry, securities for the due administration of justice, and the employment of ministers who possessed the confidence of Parliament. The new King's party fought fiercely, debate followed debate, the sittings were prolonged till, for the first time in the history of the House, lights had to be brought in; and it was only at midnight, and by a majority of

*Nov.* 1641

Digitized by Google

eleven, that the Remonstrance was finally adopted, after a scene of unexampled violence. On an attempt of the minority to offer a formal protest the slumbering passion burst into a flame. "Some waved their hats over their heads, and others took their swords in their scabbards out of their belts, and held them by the pommels in their hands, setting the lower part on the ground." Only Hampden's coolness and tact averted a conflict. The Remonstrance was felt on both sides to be a crisis in the struggle. "Had it been rejected," said Cromwell, as he left the House, "I would have sold to-morrow all I possess, and left England for ever." Listened to sullenly by the King, it kindled afresh the spirit of the country: London swore to live and die with the Parliament; associations were formed in every county for the defence of the Houses; and when the guard which Lord Essex had given them was withdrawn by the King, the populace crowded down to Westminster to take its place.

**Arrest of the Five Members**

The question which had above all broken the unity of the Parliament had been the question of the Church. All were agreed on the necessity of its reform, for the Laudian party of High Churchmen were rendered powerless by the course of events; and one of the first acts of the Parliament had been to appoint a Committee of Religion for this purpose. Within, as without the House, the general opinion was in favour of a reduction of the power and wealth of the Church, without any radical change in its constitution. Even among the bishops themselves, the more prominent saw the need for consenting to the abolition of Chapters and Bishops' Courts, as well as to the creation of a council of ministers in each diocese, which had been suggested by Archbishop Usher as a check on episcopal autocracy. A scheme to this effect was drawn up by Bishop Williams of Lincoln; but it was far from meeting the wishes of the general body of the Commons. Pym and Lord Falkland demanded, in addition to these changes, a severance of the clergy from all secular or state offices, and an expulsion of the bishops from the House of Lords. The last demand was backed by a petition from seven hundred ministers of the Church; but the strife between the two sections of episcopal reformers gave strength to the growing party who demanded the abolition of Episcopacy altogether. The doctrines of Cartwright had risen into popularity under the persecution of Laud, and Presbyterianism was now a formidable force among the middle classes. Its chief strength lay in the eastern counties and in London, where a few ministers such as Calamy and Marshall had formed a committee for its diffusion; while in Parliament it was represented by Lord Brooke, Lord Mandeville, and Lord Saye and Sele. In the Commons Sir Harry Vane represented a more extreme party of reformers, the Independents of the future, whose sentiments were little less hostile to Presbyterianism than to Episcopacy, but who acted with the Presbyterians for the present, and formed a

Digitized by Google

part of what became known as the "Root and Branch party," from its demand for the extirpation of prelacy. The attitude of Scotland in the great struggle with tyranny, and the political advantage of a religious union between the two kingdoms, as well as the desire to knit the English Church more closely to the general body of Protestantism, gave fresh force to the Presbyterian scheme. Milton, who after the composition of his "Lycidas," had spent a year in foreign travel, but had been called home from Italy by the opening of the Parliament, threw himself hotly into the theological strife. He held it "an unjust thing that the English should differ from all Churches as many as be reformed." In spite of this pressure however, and of a Petition from London with fifteen thousand signatures to the same purport, the Committee of Religion reported in favour of the moderate reforms suggested by Falkland and Pym; and the first of these was embodied by the former in a bill for the expulsion of bishops from the House of Peers, which passed the Commons almost unanimously. Rejected by the Lords on the eve of the King's journey to Scotland, it was again introduced on his return; but, in spite of violent remonstrances from the Commons, the bill still hung fire among the Peers. The delay roused the excited crowd of Londoners who gathered round Whitehall; the bishops' carriages were stopped; and the prelates themselves rabbled on their way to the House. The angry pride of Williams induced ten of his fellow bishops to declare themselves prevented from attendance in Parliament, and to protest against all acts done in their absence as null and void. The Protest was met at once on the part of the Peers by the committal of the prelates who had signed it to the Tower. But the contest gave a powerful aid to the projects of the King. The courtiers declared openly that the rabbling of the bishops proved that there was "no free Parliament," and strove to bring about fresh outrages by gathering troops of officers and soldiers of fortune, who were seeking for employment in the Irish war, and pitting them against the crowds at Whitehall. The brawls of the two parties, who gave each other the nicknames of "Round-heads" and "Cavaliers," created fresh alarm in the Parliament; but Charles persisted in refusing it a guard. "On the honour of a King," he engaged to defend them from violence as completely as his own children, but the answer had hardly been given when his Attorney appeared at the bar of the Lords, and accused Hampden, Pym, Hollis, Strode, and Haslerig of high treason in their correspondence with the Scots. A herald at arms appeared at the bar of the Commons, and demanded the surrender of the five members. All constitutional law was set aside by a charge which proceeded personally from the King, which deprived the accused of their legal right to a trial by their peers, and summoned them before a tribunal which had no pretence to a jurisdiction over them. The Commons simply promised to take the demand into

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI.
THE LONG PARLIAMENT.
1640-1644.

consideration, and again requested a guard. "I will reply to-morrow, said the King. On the morrow he summoned three hundred gentlemen to follow him, and, embracing the Queen, promised her that in an hour he would return master of his kingdom. A mob of Cavaliers joined him as he left the palace, and remained in Westminster Hall as Charles accompanied by his nephew, the Elector-Palatine, entered the House of Commons. "Mr. Speaker," he said, "I must for a time borrow your chair!" He paused with a sudden confusion as his eye fell on the vacant spot where Pym commonly sate: for at the news of his approach the House had ordered the five members to withdraw. "Gentlemen," he began in slow broken sentences, "I am sorry for this occasion of coming unto you. Yesterday I sent a Sergeant-at-arms upon a very important occasion, to apprehend some that by my command were accused of high treason, whereunto I did expect obedience, and not a message. Treason, he went on, had no privilege, "and therefore I am come to know if any of these persons that were accused are here." There was a dead silence, only broken by his reiterated "I must have them wheresoever I find them." He again paused, but the stillness was unbroken. Then he called out, "Is Mr. Pym here?" There was no answer; and Charles, turning to the Speaker, asked him whether the five members were there. Lenthall fell on his knees, and replied that he had neither eyes nor tongue to see or say anything save what the House commanded him. "Well, well," Charles angrily retorted, "'tis no matter. I think my eyes are as good as another's!" There was another long pause, while he looked carefully over the ranks of members. "I see," he said at last, "my birds are flown, but I do expect you will send them to me." If they did not, he added, he would seek them himself; and with a closing protest that he never intended any force, "he went out of the House," says an eye-witness, "in a more discontented and angry passion than he came in."

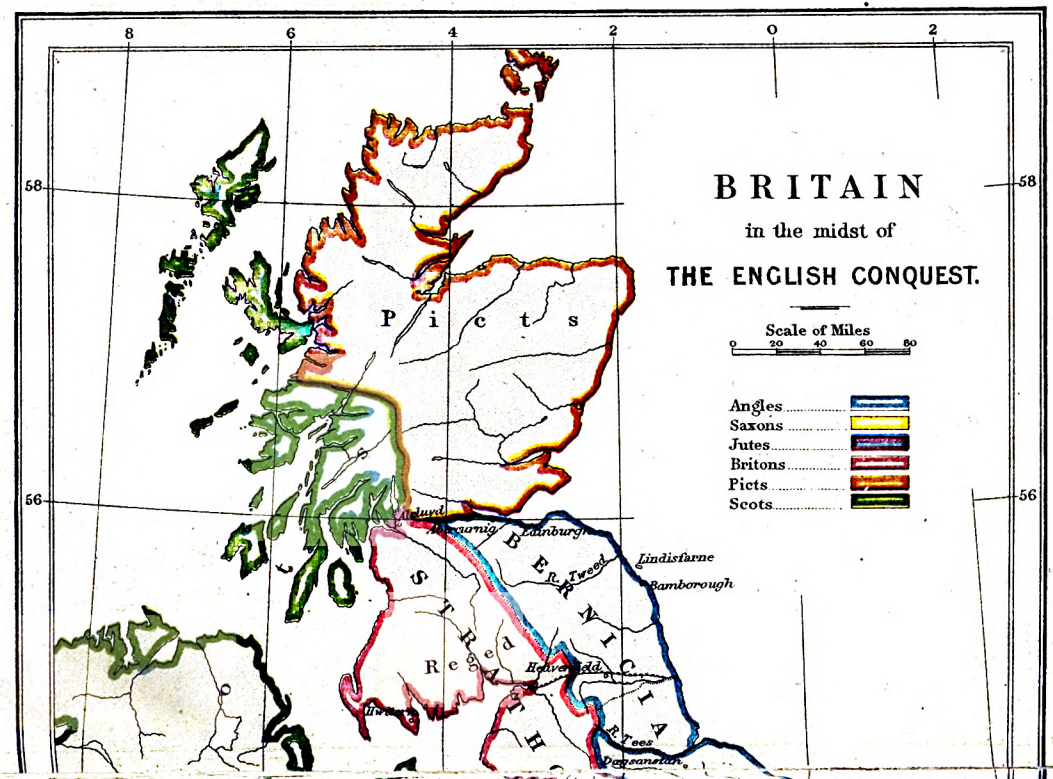
*Jan. 4, 1642.*

**The Eve of the War.**

Nothing but the absence of the five members, and the calm dignity of the Commons, had prevented the King's outrage from ending in bloodshed. "It was believed," says Whitelocke, who was present at the scene, "that if the King had found them there, and called in his guards to have seized them, the members of the House would have endeavoured the defence of them, which might have proved a very unhappy and sad business." Five hundred gentlemen of the best blood in England would hardly have stood tamely by while the bravoes of Whitehall laid hands on their leaders in the midst of the Parliament. But Charles was blind to the danger of his new course. The five members had taken refuge in the city, and it was there that on the next day the King himself demanded their surrender from the aldermen at Guildhall. Cries of "Privilege" rang round him as he returned through the streets: the writs issued for the arrest of the five were disregarded by the Sheriffs, and a proclamation issued four days later, declaring

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google




Digitized by Google

Stanfords Geographical Establishment

London: Macmillan & Co.

Digitized by Google

BRITISH MUSEUM
1 FE 75

Digitized by Google

them traitors, was answered by their triumphant return to St. Stephen's. The Trained Bands of London and Southwark were on foot, and the London watermen, sworn "to guard the Parliament, the Kingdom, and the King," escorted the five members as they passed along the river to Westminster. Terror drove the Cavaliers from Whitehall, and Charles stood absolutely alone; for the outrage had severed him for the moment from his new friends in the Parliament, and from the ministers, Falkland and Colepepper, whom he had chosen among them. But lonely as he was, Charles had resolved on war. The Earl of Newcastle was despatched to muster a Royal force in the north; and as the five members re-entered the House, Charles withdrew from Whitehall. *Jan. 10.* Both sides prepared for the coming struggle. The Queen sailed from Dover with the crown jewels to buy munitions of war. The Cavaliers again gathered round the King, and the Royalist press flooded the country with State papers drawn up by Hyde. On the other hand, mounted processions of freeholders from Buckinghamshire and Kent traversed London on their way to St. Stephen's, vowing to live and die with the Parliament. The Tower was blockaded, and the two great arsenals, Portsmouth and Hull, secured by Pym's forethought. The Lords were scared out of their policy of obstruction by his bold announcement of the new position taken by the House of Commons. "The Commons," said their leader, "will be glad to have your concurrence and help in saving the kingdom; but if they fail of it, it should not discourage them in doing their duty. And whether the kingdom be lost or saved, they shall be sorry that the story of this present Parliament should tell posterity that in so great a danger and extremity the House of Commons should be enforced to save the kingdom alone." The effect of Pym's words was seen in the passing of the bill for excluding bishops from the House of Lords. The great point, however, was to secure armed support from the nation at large, and here both sides were in a difficulty. Previous to the innovations introduced by the Tudors, and which had been taken away by the bill against pressing soldiers, the King in himself had no power of calling on his subjects generally to bear arms, save for purposes of restoring order or meeting foreign invasion. On the other hand, no one contended that such a power had ever been exercised by the two Houses without the King; and Charles steadily refused to consent to the Militia bill, in which the command of the national force was given in every county to men devoted to the Parliamentary cause. Both parties therefore broke through constitutional precedent, the Parliament in appointing Lord Lieutenants of the Militia by ordinance of the two Houses, Charles in levying forces by Royal commissions of array. The King's great difficulty lay in procuring arms, and at the end of April he suddenly appeared before Hull, the magazine of the north, and demanded admission. The new governor, Sir John Hotham, fell on his



Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE LONG PARLIAMENT. 1640-1644.

knees, but refused to open the gates: and the avowal of his act by the Parliament was followed by the withdrawal of the new Royalist party among its members from their seats at Westminster. Falkland, Colepepper, and Hyde, with thirty-two peers and sixty members of the House of Commons, joined Charles at York; and Lyttelton, the Lord Keeper, followed with the Great Seal. But the King's warlike projects were still checked by the general opposition of the country. A great meeting of the Yorkshire freeholders which he convened on Heyworth Moor ended in a petition praying him to be reconciled to the Parliament, and in spite of gifts of plate from the Universities and nobles of his party arms and money were still wanting for his new levies. The two Houses, on the other hand, gained in unity and vigour by the withdrawal of the Royalists. The Militia was rapidly enrolled, Lord Warwick named to the command of the fleet, and a loan opened in the city to which the women brought even their wedding rings. The tone of the two Houses had risen with the threat of force: and their last proposals demanded the powers of appointing and dismissing the Royal ministers, naming guardians for the Royal children, and of virtually controlling military, civil, and religious affairs. "If I granted your demands," replied Charles, "I should be no more than the mere phantom of a king."

### Section VII.—The Civil War. July 1642—Aug. 1646.

[*Authorities.*—To those given in the previous section we may add Warburton's biography of Prince Rupert, Mr. Clement Markham's admirable life of Fairfax, the Fairfax Correspondence, and Ludlow's "Memoirs." Sprigg's "Anglia Rediviva" gives the best account of the New Model and its doings. For Cromwell, the primary authority is Mr. Carlyle's "Life and Letters," an invaluable store of documents, edited with the care of an antiquarian and the genius of a poet. Clarendon, who is now of great value, gives a fine account of the Cornish rising.]

**Edgehill.**

The breaking off of negotiations was followed on both sides by preparations for immediate war. Hampden, Pym, and Hollis, became the guiding spirits of a Committee of Public Safety which was created by Parliament as its administrative organ; English and Scotch officers were drawn from the Low Countries, and Lord Essex named commander of an army of twenty thousand foot and four thousand horse. The confidence on the Parliamentary side was great; "we all thought one battle would decide," Baxter confessed after the first encounter; for the King was almost destitute of money and arms, and in spite of his strenuous efforts to raise recruits he was embarrassed by the reluctance of his own adherents to begin the struggle. Resolved, however, to force on a contest, he raised the Royal Standard at *Aug. 23.* Nottingham "on the evening of a very stormy and tempestuous day," but the country made no answer to his appeal; while Essex, who

Digitized by Google

had quitted London amidst the shouts of a great multitude, with orders from the Parliament to follow the King, "and by battle or other way rescue him from his perfidious councillors and restore him to Parliament," mustered his army at Northampton. Charles had but a handful of men, and the dash of a few regiments of horse would have ended the war; but Essex shrank from a decisive stroke, and trusted to reduce Charles to submission by a show of force. No sooner, however, had the King fallen back on Shrewsbury than the whole face of affairs suddenly changed. Catholics and Royalists rallied fast to his standard, and a bold march on London drew Essex from his inactivity at Worcester to protect the capital. The two armies fell in with one another on the field of Edgehill, near Banbury. The encounter was a surprise, and the battle which followed was little more than a confused combat of horse. At its outset the desertion of Sir Faithful Fortescue, with a whole regiment, threw the Parliamentary forces into disorder, while the Royalist horse on either wing drove their opponents from the field; but the reserve of Lord Essex broke the Royalist foot, which formed the centre of the King's line, and though his nephew, Prince Rupert, brought back his squadrons in time to save Charles from capture or flight, the night fell on a drawn battle. The moral advantage, however, rested with the King. Essex had learned that his troopers were no match for the Cavaliers, and his withdrawal to Warwick left open the road to the capital. Rupert pressed for an instant march on London, but the proposal found stubborn opponents among the moderate Royalists, who dreaded the complete triumph of Charles as much as his defeat. The King therefore paused for the time at Oxford, where he was received with uproarious welcome; and when the cowardice of its garrison delivered Reading to Rupert's horse, and his daring capture of Brentford drew the Royal army in his support almost to the walls of the capital, the panic of the Londoners was already over, and the junction of their trainbands with the army of Essex forced Charles to fall back again on his old quarters. But though the Parliament rallied quickly from the blow of Edgehill, the war, as its area widened through the winter, went steadily for the King. The fortification of Oxford gave him a firm hold on the midland counties; while the balance of the two parties in the north was overthrown by the march of the Earl of Newcastle, with the force he had raised in Northumberland, upon York. Lord Fairfax, the Parliamentary leader in that county, was thrown back on the manufacturing towns of the West Riding, where Puritanism found its stronghold; and the arrival of the Queen with arms from Holland encouraged the Royal army to push its scouts across the Trent, and threaten the eastern counties, which held firmly for the Parliament. The stress of the war was shown by the vigorous exertions of the two Houses. The negotiations which had gone on

*Oct.* 23.



Digitized by Google

Sec. VII. The Civil War. 1642-1646.

into the spring were broken off by the old demand that the King should return to his Parliament; London was fortified; and a tax of two millions a year was laid on the districts which adhered to the Parliamentary cause. Essex, whose army had been freshly equipped, was ordered to advance upon Oxford; but though the King held himself ready to fall back on the west, the Earl shrank from again risking his raw army in an encounter. He confined himself to the recapture of Reading, and to a month of idle encampment round Brill, while disease thinned his ranks and the Royalists beat up his quarters.

1643.

**The Cornish rising**

While Essex lingered and manœuvred, Charles boldly detached a part of his small force at Oxford to strengthen a Royalist rising in the west. Nowhere was the Royal cause to take so brave or noble a form as among the Cornishmen. Cornwall stood apart from the general life of England: cut off from it not only by differences of blood and speech, but by the feudal tendencies of its people, who clung with a Celtic loyalty to their local chieftains, and suffered their fidelity to the Crown to determine their own. They had as yet done little more than keep the war out of their own county; but the march of a small Parliamentary force under Lord Stamford upon Launceston forced them into action. A little band of Cornishmen gathered round the chivalrous Sir Bevil Greenvil, "so destitute of provisions that the best officers had but a biscuit a day," and with only a handful of powder for the whole force; but starving and outnumbered as they were, they scaled the steep rise of Stratton Hill, sword in hand, and drove Stamford back on Exeter, with a loss of two thousand men, his ordnance and baggage train. Sir Ralph Hopton, the best of the Royalist generals, took the command of their army as it advanced into Somerset, and drew the stress of the war into the west. Essex despatched a picked force under Sir William Waller to check their advance; but Somerset was already lost ere he reached Bath, and the Cornishmen stormed his strong position on Lansdowne Hill in the teeth of his guns. But the stubborn fight robbed the victors of their leaders; Hopton was wounded, Greenvil slain, and with them fell the two heroes of the little army, Sir Nicholas Slanning and Sir John Trevanion, "both young, neither of them above eight and twenty, of entire friendship to one another, and to Sir Bevil Greenvil." Waller, beaten as he was, hung on their weakened force as it moved for aid upon Oxford, and succeeded in cooping up the foot in Devizes. But the horse broke through, and joining an army which had been sent to their relief under Wilmot, afterwards Lord Rochester, turned back, and dashed Waller's army to pieces in a fresh victory on Roundway Down. The Cornish rising seemed to have turned the tide of the war. Strengthened by their earlier successes, and by the succours which his Queen brought from the north, Charles had already prepared to advance, when Rupert, in a daring raid upon Wycombe, met a party of Parliamentary horse,

*May*, 1643.

*July*, 1643.

Digitized by Google

with Hampden at its head, on Chalgrove field. The skirmish ended in the success of the Royalists, and Hampden was seen riding off the field "before the action was done, which he never used to do, and with his head hanging down, and resting his hands upon the neck of his horse." He was mortally wounded, and his death seemed an omen of the ruin of the cause he loved. Disaster followed disaster. Essex, more and more anxious for a peace, fell back on Uxbridge; while a cowardly surrender of Bristol to Prince Rupert gave Charles the second city of the kingdom, and the mastery of the west. The news fell on the Parliament "like a sentence of death." The Lords debated nothing but proposals of peace. London itself was divided; "a great multitude of the wives of substantial citizens" clamoured at the door of the Commons for peace; and a flight of six of the few peers who remained at Westminster to the camp at Oxford proved the general despair of the Parliament's success.

**The Covenant.**

From this moment, however, the firmness of the Parliamentary leaders began slowly to reverse the fortunes of the war. Waller was received on his return from Roundway Hill "as if he had brought the King prisoner with him." A new army was placed under the command of Lord Manchester to check the progress of Newcastle. In the west, indeed, things still went badly. Prince Maurice continued Rupert's career of success, and the conquest of Barnstaple and Exeter secured Devon for the King. Gloucester alone interrupted the communications between his forces in Bristol and in the north; and Charles moved against the city, with hope of a speedy surrender. But the gallant resistance of the town called Essex to its relief. It was reduced to a single barrel of powder when the Earl's approach forced Charles to raise the siege; and the Puritan army fell steadily back again on London, after an indecisive engagement near Newbury, in which Lord Falkland fell, "ingeminating 'Peace, peace!'" and the London trainbands flung Rupert's horsemen roughly off their front of pikes. In this posture of his affairs nothing but a great victory could have saved the King, for the day which witnessed the triumphant return of Essex witnessed the solemn taking of the Covenant. Pym had resolved, at last, to fling the Scotch sword into the wavering balance; and in the darkest hour of the Parliament's cause Sir Harry Vane had been despatched to Edinburgh to arrange the terms on which the aid of Scotland would be given. First amongst them stood the demand of a "unity in Religion;" an adoption, in other words, of the Presbyterian system by the Church of England. Events had moved so rapidly since the earlier debates on Church government in the Commons that some arrangement of this kind had become a necessity. The bishops to a man, and the bulk of the clergy whose bent was purely episcopal, had joined the Royal cause, and were being expelled from their livings as "delinquents." Some new system of Church government was impera-

*Aug.* 1643.

*Sept.*25, 1645

Digitized by Google

SEC. VII.
THE CIVIL WAR.
1642-1646.

tively called for by the religious necessities of the country; and, though Pym and the leading statesmen were still in opinion moderate Episcopalians, the growing force of Presbyterianism, as well as the needs of the war, forced them to seek such a system in the adoption of the Scotch discipline. Scotland, for its part, saw that the triumph of the Parliament was necessary for its own security; and whatever difficulties stood in the way of Vane's wary and rapid negotiations were removed by the policy of the King. While the Parliament looked for aid to the north, Charles had long been seeking assistance from the Irish rebels. The Massacre had left them the objects of a vengeful hate such as England had hardly known before, but with Charles they were simply counters in his game of king-craft. The conclusion of a truce with them left the army under Lord Ormond, which had hitherto held their revolt in check, at the King's disposal for service in England; and at the same moment he secured a force of Irish Catholics to support by their landing in Argyleshire a rising of the Highlands under Montrose, which aimed at the overthrow of the government at Edinburgh. None of the King's schemes proved so fatal to his cause as these. On their discovery officer after officer in his own army flung down their commissions, the peers who had fled to Oxford fled back again to London, and the Royalist reaction in the Parliament itself came utterly to an end. Scotland, anxious for its own safety, hastened to sign the Covenant; and the Commons, "with uplifted hands," swore in St. Margaret's church to observe it. They pledged themselves to "bring the Churches of God in the three Kingdoms to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion, confession of faith, form of Church government, direction for worship, and catechizing; that we, and our posterity after us, may as brethren live in faith and love, and the Lord may delight to live in the midst of us": to extirpate Popery, prelacy, superstition, schism, and profaneness; to "preserve the rights and privileges of the Parliament, and the liberties of the Kingdom;" to punish malignants and opponents of reformation in Church and State; to "unite the two Kingdoms in a firm peace and union to all posterity." The Covenant ended with a solemn acknowledgment of national sin, and a vow of reformation. "Our true, unfeigned purpose, desire, and endeavour for ourselves and all others under our power and charge, both in public and private, in all duties we owe to God and man, is to amend our lives, and each one to go before another in the example of a real reformation."

**Marston Moor.**

The conclusion of the Covenant had been the last work of Pym, but it was only a part of the great plan which he had formed, and which was carried out by the "Committee of the Two Kingdoms," who were entrusted after his death with the conduct of the war, and of foreign affairs. Three strong armies, comprising a force of fifty thousand men, had been raised for the coming campaign. Essex, with the army

Digitized by Google

of the centre, was charged with the duty of watching the King at Oxford, and following him if he moved, as was expected, to the north against the Scots. Waller, with the army of the west, was ordered to check Prince Maurice, in Dorset and Devon. The force of fourteen thousand men which had been raised by the zeal of the eastern counties, and in which Cromwell's name was becoming famous as a leader, was raised into a third army under Lord Manchester, and directed to co-operate in Yorkshire with Sir Thomas Fairfax and the Scots. Charles was at once thrown on the defensive. The Irish troops whose aid he had secured by his truce with the rebels were cut to pieces soon after their arrival in England, those who landed in the south by Waller, and their fellows in Cheshire by Sir Thomas Fairfax. The hands of the last commander had been freed by the march of Newcastle to the Border, which the Scots were crossing "in a great frost and snow;" but after his dispersion of the Irish troops, he at once called back his opponent to York by a victory on his return over the forces which the Marquis had left to protect that capital. The plan of Pym was now rapidly developed. Essex and Waller joined in the blockade of *Jan.* 1644. Oxford, while Manchester and Fairfax united with the Scots under the walls of York. Newcastle's cry for aid had already been answered by the despatch of Prince Rupert from Oxford to gather forces on the Welsh border; and the brilliant partizan, after breaking the sieges of Newark and Latham House, burst over the Lancashire Hills into Yorkshire, slipped by the Parliamentary army, and made his way untouched into York. But the success of his feat of arms tempted him to a fresh act of daring; he resolved on a decisive battle, and a discharge of musketry *July* 1, 1644. from the two armies as they faced each other on Marston Moor brought on, as evening gathered, a disorderly engagement. On the one flank a charge of the King's horse broke that of the Scotch; on the other, Cromwell's brigade of "Ironsides" won as complete a success over Rupert's troopers. "God made them as stubble to our swords," wrote the general at the close of the day; but in the heat of victory he called back his men from the chase to back Manchester in his attack on the Royalist foot, and to rout their other wing of horse as it returned breathless from pursuing the Scots. Nowhere had the fighting been so fierce. A young Puritan who lay dying on the field told Cromwell as he bent over him that one thing lay on his spirit. "I asked him what it was," Cromwell wrote afterwards. "He told me it was that God had not suffered him to be any more the executioner of his enemies." At night-fall all was over; and the Royalist cause in the north had perished at a single blow. Newcastle fled over sea: York surrendered, and Rupert, with hardly a man at his back, rode southward to Oxford. The blow was the more terrible that it fell on Charles at a moment when his triumph in every other quarter was being secured by a series of brilliant and unexpected successes. After

Digitized by Google

SEC. VII. THE CIVIL WAR. 1642-1646.

a month's siege the King had escaped from Oxford; had waited till Essex marched into the west; and then, turning fiercely on Waller at Cropredy Bridge, had driven him back broken to London, two days before the battle at Marston Moor. Charles followed up his success by hurrying in the track of Essex, whom he hoped to crush between his own force and that under Prince Maurice which the Earl had marched to attack. By a fatal error, Essex plunged into Cornwall, where the country was hostile, and where the King hemmed him in among the hills, drew his lines tightly round his army, and forced the whole body of the foot to surrender at his mercy, while the horse cut their way through the besiegers, and Essex himself fled by sea to London. The day of the surrender was signalized by a Royalist triumph in Scotland which promised to undo what Marston Moor had done. The plot which had long since been formed for the conquest of Scotland was revived by the landing of Irish soldiers in Argyle. Montrose, throwing himself into the Highlands, called the clans to arms; and flinging his new force on that of the Covenanters at Tippermuir gained a victory which enabled him to occupy Perth, to sack Aberdeen, and to spread terror to Edinburgh. The news fired Charles, as he came up from the west, to venture on a march upon London; but though the Scots were detained by the siege of Newcastle, the rest of the victors at Marston Moor lay in his path at Newbury, and their force was strengthened by the army which had surrendered in Cornwall, and was again brought into the field. The furious charges of the Royalists failed to break the Parliamentary squadrons, and the soldiers of Essex wiped away the shame of their defeat by flinging themselves on the cannon they had lost, and bringing them back in triumph to their lines. Cromwell seized the moment of victory, and begged hard to be suffered to charge with his single brigade. But Manchester, like Essex, shrank from a crowning victory over the King. Charles was allowed to withdraw his army to Oxford, and even to reappear unchecked in the field of his defeat.

*Oct.* 1644.

**Cromwell.**

The quarrel of Cromwell with Lord Manchester at Newbury was destined to give a new colour and direction to the war. Pym, in fact, had hardly been borne to his grave in Westminster Abbey before England instinctively recognized a successor of yet greater genius in the victor of Marston Moor. Born in the closing years of Elizabeth's reign, the child of a cadet of the great house of the Cromwells of Hinchinbrook, and connected through his mother with Hampden and St. John, Oliver had been recalled by his father's death from a short stay at Cambridge to the little family estate at Huntingdon, which he quitted for a farm at St. Ives. We have already seen his mood during the years of Tyranny, as he dwelt in "prolonging" and "blackness" amidst fancies of coming death, the melancholy which formed the ground of his nature feeding itself on the inaction of the time. But his

1599.

Digitized by Google

energy made itself felt the moment the Tyranny was over. His father had sat, with three of his uncles, in the later Parliaments of Elizabeth. Oliver had himself been returned to that of 1628, and the town of Cambridge sent him as its representative to the Short Parliament as to the Long. It is in the latter that a courtier, Sir Philip Warwick, gives us our first glimpse of his actual appearance. "I came into the House one morning, well clad, and perceived a gentleman speaking whom I knew not, very ordinarily apparelled, for it was a plain cloth-suit, which seemed to have been made by an ill country tailor. His linen was plain, and not very clean; and I remember a speck or two of blood upon his little band, which was not much larger than his collar. His hat was without a hat-band. His stature was of a good size; his sword stuck close to his side; his countenance sworn and reddish; his voice sharp and untuneable, and his eloquence full of fervour." He was already "much hearkened unto," but his power was to assert itself in deeds rather than in words. He appeared at the head of a troop of his own raising at Edgehill; but with the eye of a born soldier he at once saw the blot in the army of Essex. "A set of poor tapsters and town apprentices," he warned Hampden, "would never fight against men of honour;" and he pointed to religious enthusiasm as the one weapon which could meet and turn the chivalry of the Cavalier. Even to Hampden the plan seemed impracticable; but the regiment of a thousand men which Cromwell raised for the Association of the Eastern Counties, and which soon became known as his Ironsides, was formed strictly of "men of religion." He spent his fortune freely on the task he set himself. "The business . . . . hath had of me in money between eleven and twelve hundred pounds, therefore my private estate can do little to help the public. . . . I have little money of my own (left) to help my soldiers." But they were "a lovely company," he tells his friends with soldierly pride. No blasphemy, drinking, disorder, or impiety were suffered in their ranks. "Not a man swears but he pays his twelve pence." Nor was his choice of "men of religion" the only innovation Cromwell introduced into his new regiment. The social traditions which restricted command to men of birth were disregarded. "It may be," he wrote, in answer to complaints from the committee of the Association, "it provokes your spirit to see such plain men made captains of horse. It had been well that men of honour and birth had entered into their employments; but why do they not appear? But seeing it is necessary the work must go on, better plain men than none: but best to have men patient of wants, faithful and conscientious in their employment, and such, I hope, these will approve themselves." The words paint Cromwell's temper accurately enough: he is far more of the practical soldier than of the theological reformer; though his genius already breaks in upon his aristocratic and conservative sympathies, and catches glimpses of the social

Digitized by Google

SEC. VII.
THE CIVIL WAR.
1642-1646.

revolution to which the war was drifting. "I had rather," he once burst out impatiently, "have a plain russet-coated captain, that knows what he fights for and loves what he knows, than what you call a gentleman, and is nothing else. I honour a gentleman that is so indeed!" he ends with a characteristic return to his more common mood of feeling. The same practical temper broke out in an innovation which had more immediate results. Bitter as had been his hatred of the bishops, and strenuously as he had worked to bring about a change in Church government, Cromwell, like most of the Parliamentary leaders, seems to have been content with the new Presbyterianism, and the Presbyterians were more than content with him. Lord Manchester "suffered him to guide the army at his pleasure." "The man, Cromwell," writes the Scotchman Baillie, "is a very wise and active head, universally well beloved as religious and stout." But against dissidents from their own system, the Presbyterians were as bitter as Laud himself; and, as we shall see, Nonconformity was now rising every day into larger proportions, while the new claim of liberty of worship was becoming one of the problems of the time. Cromwell met the problem in his unspeculative fashion. He wanted good soldiers and good men; and, if they were these, the Independent, the Baptist, the Leveller, found entry among his Ironsides. "You would respect them, did you see them," he answered the panic-stricken Presbyterians who charged them with "Anabaptistry" and revolutionary aims: "they are no Anabaptists: they are honest, sober Christians; they expect to be used as men." He was soon to be driven—as in the social change we noticed before—to a far larger and grander point of view. "The State," he boldly laid down at last, "in choosing men to serve it, takes no notice of their opinions. If they be willing faithfully to serve it, that satisfies." But as yet he was busier with his new regiment than with theories; and the Ironsides were no sooner in action than they proved themselves such soldiers as the war had never seen yet. "Truly they were never beaten at all," their leader said proudly at its close. At Winceby fight they charged "singing psalms," cleared Lincolnshire of the Cavendishes, and freed the eastern counties from all danger from Newcastle's part. At Marston Moor they faced and routed Rupert's chivalry. At Newbury it was only Manchester's reluctance that hindered them from completing the ruin of Charles.

**The New Model.**

Cromwell had shown his capacity for organization in the creation of the Ironsides; his military genius had displayed itself at Marston Moor. Newbury first raised him into a political leader. "Without a more speedy, vigorous, and effective prosecution of the war," he said to the Commons after his quarrel with Manchester, "casting off all lingering proceedings, like those of soldiers of fortune beyond sea to spin out a war, we shall make the kingdom weary of us, and hate the name of a Parliament." But under the leaders who at present con-

Digitized by Google

ducted it a vigorous conduct of the war was hopeless. They were, in Cromwell's plain words, "afraid to conquer." They desired not to crush Charles, but to force him back, with as much of his old strength remaining as might be, to the position of a constitutional King. The old loyalty, too, clogged their enterprise; they shrank from the taint of treason. "If the King be beaten," Manchester urged at Newbury, "he will still be king; if he beat us he will hang us all for traitors." To a mood like this Cromwell's reply seemed horrible. "If I met the King in battle I would fire my pistol at the King as at another." The army, too, as he long ago urged at Edgehill, was not an army to conquer with. Now, as then, he urged that till the whole force was new modelled, and placed under a stricter discipline, "they must not expect any notable success in anything they went about." But the first step in such a re-organization must be a change of officers. The army was led and officered by members of the two Houses, and the Self-renouncing Ordinance, which was introduced by Cromwell and Vane, declared the tenure of military or civil offices incompatible with a seat in either. In spite of a long and bitter resistance, which was justified at a later time by the political results which followed this rupture of the tie which had hitherto bound the Army to the Parliament, the drift of public opinion was too strong to be withstood. The passage of the Ordinance brought about the retirement of Essex, Manchester, and Waller; and the new organization of the army went *April* 1645 rapidly on under a new commander-in-chief, Sir Thomas Fairfax, the hero of the long contest in Yorkshire, and who had been raised into fame by his victory at Nantwich, and his bravery at Marston Moor. The principles on which Cromwell had formed his Ironsides were carried out on a larger scale in the "New Model." The one aim was to get together twenty thousand "honest" men. "Be careful," Cromwell wrote, "what captains of horse you choose, what men be mounted. A few honest men are better than numbers. If you choose godly honest men to be captains of horse, honest men will follow them." The result was a curious medley of men of different ranks among the officers of the New Model. The bulk of those in high command remained men of noble or gentle blood, Montagues, Pickerings, Fortescues, Sheffields, Sidneys, and the like. But side by side with these, though in far smaller proportion, were seen officers like Ewer, who had been a serving-man, like Okey, who had been a drayman, or Rainsborough, who had been a "skipper at sea." Equally strange was the mixture of religions in its ranks. A clause in the Act for new modelling the army had enabled Fairfax to dispense with the signature of the Covenant in the case of "godly men;" and among the farmers from the eastern counties, who formed the bulk of its privates, dissidence of every type had gained a firm foothold. A result hardly less notable, though less foreseen, was the youth of the officers. Among those in

Digitized by Google

SEC. VII. THE CIVIL WAR. 1642-1646.

high command there were few who, like Cromwell, had passed middle age. Fairfax was but thirty-three, and most of his colonels were even younger. Of the political aspect of the New Model we shall have to speak at a later time; but as yet its energy was directed solely to "the speedy and vigorous prosecution of the war." The efforts of the peace party were frustrated at the very moment when Fairfax was ready for action by the policy of the King. From the moment when Newbury marked the breach between the peace and war parties in the Parliament, the Scotch Commissioners had been backed by the former in pressing for fresh negotiations with Charles. These were opened at Uxbridge, and prolonged for six months; but the hopes of concession which Charles had held out through the winter were suddenly withdrawn in the spring. He saw, as he thought, the Parliamentary army dissolved and ruined by the new modelling, at the instant when news came from Scotland of fresh successes on the part of Montrose, and of his overthrow of the Marquis of Argyle's troops in the victory of Inverlochy. "Before the end of the summer," wrote the conqueror, "I shall be in a position to come to your Majesty's aid with a brave army." The negotiations at Uxbridge were at once broken off, and a few months later the King opened his campaign by a march to the north where he hoped to form a junction with Montrose. Leicester was stormed, the blockade of Chester raised, and the eastern counties threatened, until Fairfax, who had hoped to draw Charles back again by a blockade of Oxford, hurried at last on his track. Cromwell, who had been suffered by the House to retain his command for a few days, joined Fairfax as he drew near the King, and his arrival was greeted by loud shouts of welcome from the troops. The two armies met near Naseby, to the north-west of Northampton. The King was eager to fight. "Never have my affairs been in as good a state," he cried; and Prince Rupert was as impatient as his uncle. On the other side, even Cromwell doubted the success of the new experiment. "I can say this of Naseby," he wrote soon after, "that when I saw the enemy draw up and march in gallant order towards us, and we a company of poor ignorant men, to seek to order our battle, the general having commanded me to order all the horse, I could not, riding alone about my business, but smile out to God in praises, in assurance of victory, because God would by things that are not bring to nought things that are. Of which I had great assurance, and God did it." The battle began with a furious charge of Rupert uphill, which routed the wing opposed to him under Ireton; while the Royalist foot, after a single discharge, clubbed their muskets and fell on the centre under Fairfax so hotly that it slowly and stubbornly gave way. But the Ironsides were conquerors on the left. A single charge broke the northern horse under Langdale, who had already fled before them at Marston Moor; and holding his troops firmly in hand, Crom-

*June 14, 1645.*

Digitized by Google

well fell with them on the flank of the Royalist foot in the very crisis of its success. A panic of the Royal reserve, and its flight from the field, aided his efforts: it was in vain that Rupert returned with forces exhausted by pursuit, that Charles, in a passion of despair, called on his troopers for "one charge more." The battle was over: artillery, baggage, even the Royal papers, fell into the conquerors' hands: five thousand men surrendered; only two thousand followed the King in his headlong flight upon the west. The war was ended at a blow. While Charles wandered helplessly in search of fresh forces, Fairfax marched rapidly into Somersetshire, routed the Royal forces at Langport, and in three weeks was master of the west. A victory at Kilsyth, which gave Scotland for the moment to Montrose, threw a transient gleam over the darkening fortunes of his master's cause; but the surrender of Bristol, and the dispersion of the last force Charles could collect in an attempt to relieve Chester, was followed by news of the crushing and irretrievable defeat of the "Great Marquis" at Philiphaugh. In *September, 1645.* the wreck of the Royal cause we may pause for a moment over an incident which brings out in relief the best temper of both sides. Cromwell "spent much time with God in prayer before the storm" of Basing House, where the Marquis of Winchester had held stoutly out through the war for the King. The storm ended its resistance, and the brave old Royalist was brought in a prisoner with his house flaming around him. He "broke out," reports a Puritan bystander, "and said, 'that if the King had no more ground in England but Basing House he would adventure it as he did, and so maintain it to the uttermost,' comforting himself in this matter 'that Basing House was called Loyalty.'" Of loyalty such as this Charles was utterly unworthy. The seizure of his papers at Naseby had hardly disclosed his intrigues with the Irish Catholics when the Parliament was able to reveal to England a fresh treaty with them, which purchased no longer their neutrality, but their aid, by the simple concession of every demand they had made. The shame was without profit, for whatever aid *1646.* Ireland might have given came too late to be of service. The spring of the following year saw the few troops who still clung to Charles surrounded and routed at Stow. "You have done your work now," their leader, Sir Jacob Astley, said bitterly to his conquerors, "and may go to play, unless you fall out among yourselves."

Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII.

THE ARMY AND THE PARLIAMENT. 1646–1649.

## Section VIII.—The Army and the Parliament. 1646—1649.

[*Authorities.*—Mainly as before, though Clarendon, invaluable during the progress of the war, is of little value here, and Cromwell's letters become, unfortunately, few at the moment when we most need their aid. On the other hand, Ludlow and Whitelock, as well as the passionate and unscrupulous "Memoirs" of Holles and Major Hutchinson, become of much importance. For Charles himself, we have Sir Thomas Herbert's "Memoirs" of the last two years of this reign. Burnet's "Lives of the Hamiltons" throw a good deal of light on Scotch affairs at this time, and Sir James Turner's "Memoirs" on the Scotch invasion. The early history of the Independents, and of the principle of religious freedom, is well told by Mr. Masson ("Life of Milton," vol. iii.).]

**The Independents.**

With the close of the Civil War we enter on a short period of confused struggles, tedious and uninteresting in its outer details, but of far higher interest than even the War itself in its bearing on our after history. Modern England, the England among whose thoughts and sentiments we actually live, began with the triumph of Naseby. Old things passed suddenly away. When Astley gave up his sword the "work" of the generations which had struggled for Protestantism against Catholicism, for public liberty against absolute rule, in his own emphatic phrase, was "done." So far as these contests were concerned, however the later Stuarts might strive to revive them, England could safely "go to play." But with the end of this older work a new work at once began. The constitutional and ecclesiastical problems which still in one shape or another beset us started to the front as subjects of national debate in the years between the close of the Civil War and the death of the King. The two great parties which have ever since divided the social, the political, and the religious life of England, whether as Independents and Presbyterians, as Whigs and Tories, or as Conservatives and Liberals, sprang into organized existence in the contest between the Army and the Parliament. Then for the first time began the struggle between political tradition and political progress, between the principle of religious conformity and the principle of religious freedom, which is far from having ended yet.

It was the religious struggle which drew the political in its train. We have already witnessed the rise under Elizabeth of sects who did not aim, like the Presbyterians, at a change in Church government, but rejected the notion of a national Church at all, and insisted on the right of each congregation to perfect independence of faith and worship. At the close of the Queen's reign, however, these "Brownists," as they were called from one Brown, a clergyman who maintained their tenets, had almost entirely disappeared. Some, as we saw in the notable instance of the congregation which produced the Pilgrim Fathers, had found a refuge in Holland, but the bulk had been driven to a fresh con-

Digitized by Google

formity with the Established Church. "As for those which we call Brownists," says Bacon, "being when they were at the best a very small number of very silly and base people, here and there in corners dispersed, they are now (thanks be to God) by the good remedies that have been used, suppressed and worn out so as there is scarce any news of them." As soon, however, as Abbot's primacy promised a milder rule, the Separatist refugees began to venture timidly back again to England. During their exile in Holland the main body, under Robinson, had contented themselves with the free development of their system of independent congregations, each forming in itself a complete Church, and to them the name of Independents at a later time attached itself. A small part, however, had drifted into a more marked severance in doctrine from the Established Church, especially in their belief of the necessity of adult baptism, a belief from which their obscure congregation at Leyden became known as that of the Baptists. Both of these sects gathered a church in London in the middle of James's reign, but the persecuting zeal of Laud prevented any spread of their opinions under that of his successor; and it was not till their numbers were suddenly increased by the return of a host of emigrants from New England, with Hugh Peters at their head, on the opening of the Long Parliament, that the Congregational or Independent body began to attract attention. Lilburne and Burton soon declared themselves adherents of what was called "the New England way;" and a year later saw in London alone the rise of "four score congregations of several sectaries," as Bishop Hall scornfully tells us, "instructed by guides fit for them, cobblers, tailors, felt-makers, and such-like trash." But little religious weight however could be attributed as yet to the Congregational movement. Baxter at this time had not heard of the existence of any Independents. Milton in his earlier pamphlets shows no sign of their influence. Of the hundred and five ministers present in the Westminster Assembly only five were Congregational in sympathy, and these were all returned refugees from Holland. Among the one hundred and twenty London ministers in 1643, only three were suspected of leanings towards the Sectaries.

**Presbyterian England.**

The struggle with Charles in fact at its outset only threw new difficulties in the way of religious freedom. It was with strictly conservative aims in ecclesiastical as in political matters that Pym and his colleagues began the strife. Their avowed purpose was simply to restore the Church of England to its state under Elizabeth, and to free it from "innovations," from the changes introduced by Laud and his fellow prelates. The great majority of the Parliament were averse to any alterations in the constitution or doctrine of the Church itself; and it was only the refusal of the bishops to accept any diminution of their power and revenues, the growth of a party hostile to Episcopalian

Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII.
THE ARMY AND THE PARLIAMENT.
1646-1649.

Government, the necessity for purchasing the aid of the Scots by a union in religion as in politics, and above all the urgent need of constructing some new ecclesiastical organization in the place of the older organization which had become impossible from the Royalist attitude of the bishops, that forced on the two Houses the adoption of the Covenant. But the change to a Presbyterian system of Church government seemed at that time of little import to the bulk of Englishmen. The Laudian dogma of the necessity of bishops was held by few; and the change was generally regarded with approval as one which brought the Church of England nearer to that of Scotland, and to the reformed Churches of the continent. But whatever might be the change in its administration, no one imagined that it had ceased to be the Church of England. The Tudor theory of its relation to the State, of its right to embrace all Englishmen within its pale, and to dictate what should be their faith and form of worship, remained utterly unquestioned by any man of note. The sentiments on which such a theory rested indeed for its main support, the power of historical tradition, the association of "dissidence" with danger to the state, the strong English instinct of order, the as strong English dislike of "innovations," with the abhorrence of "indifferency," as a sign of luke-warmness in matters of religion, had only been intensified by the earlier incidents of the struggle with the King. The Parliament therefore had steadily pressed on the new system of ecclesiastical government in the midst of the troubles of the war. An Assembly of Divines assembled at Westminster received orders
1643-8. to revise the Articles, to draw up a Confession of Faith, and a Directory of Public Worship, and these, with their scheme of Church government, a scheme only distinguished from that of Scotland by the significant addition of a lay court of superior appeal set by Parliament over the whole system of Church courts and assemblies, were accepted by the Houses and embodied in a series of Ordinances.

**Freedom of Conscience.**

Had the change been made at the moment when "with uplifted hands" the Commons swore to the Covenant in St. Margaret's it would probably have been accepted by the country at large. But it met with a very different welcome when it came at the end of the war. In spite of repeated votes of Parliament for its establishment, the pure Presbyterian system took root only in London and Lancashire. While the Divines, indeed, were drawing up their platform of uniform belief and worship in the Jerusalem Chamber dissidence had grown into a religious power. In the terrible agony of the long struggle against Charles, individual conviction became a stronger force than religious tradition. Theological speculation took an unprecedented boldness from the temper of the times. Four years after the war had begun a horror-stricken pamphleteer numbered sixteen religious sects as existing in defiance of the law; and, widely as these bodies differed

Digitized by Google

among themselves, all at one in repudiating any right of control in faith or worship by the Church or its clergy. Milton, who had left his Presbyterian stand-point, saw at last that "new Presbyter is but old Priest writ large." The question of sectarianism soon grew into a practical one from its bearing on the war: for the class specially infected with the new spirit of religious freedom was just the class to whose zeal and vigour the Parliament was forced to look for success in its struggle. We have seen the prevalence of this spirit among the farmers from whom Cromwell drew his Ironsides, and his enlistment of these "sectaries" was the first direct breach in the old system of conformity. Cromwell had signed the Covenant, and there is no reason for crediting him with any aversion to Presbyterianism as a system of doctrine or of Church organization. His first step, indeed, was a purely practical one, a step dictated by military necessities, and excused in his mind by a sympathy with "honest" men, as well as by the growing but still vague notion of a communion among Christians wider than that of outer conformity in worship or belief. But the alarm and remonstrances of the Presbyterians forced his mind rapidly forward. "The State in choosing men to serve it," Cromwell wrote before Marston Moor, "takes no notice of their opinions. If they be willing faithfully to serve it, that satisfies." Marston Moor encouraged him to press on the Parliament the necessity of at least "tolerating" dissidents, and he succeeded in procuring the appointment of a committee to find some means of effecting this. But the conservative temper of the Presbyterian Churchmen was fairly roused by his act, and by the growth of sectarianism. "We detest and abhor," wrote the London clergy in 1645, "the much endeavoured Toleration." The corporation of London petitioned Parliament to suppress "all sects without toleration." The Parliament itself was steadily on the conservative side, but the fortunes of the war told as steadily against conservatism. Essex and the Presbyterians marched from defeat to defeat. It was necessary to new model the army, and to raise the New Model it was found necessary to give Fairfax power to dispense with any signatures to the Covenant. The victory of Naseby raised a far wider question than that of mere toleration. "Honest men served you faithfully in this action," Cromwell wrote to the Speaker of the House of Commons from the very field. "Sir, they are trusty: I beseech you in the name of God not to discourage them. He that ventures his life for the liberty of his country, I wish he trust God for the liberty of his conscience." The storm of Bristol encouraged him to proclaim the new principles yet more distinctly. "Presbyterians, Independents, all here have the same spirit of faith and prayer, the same presence and answer. They agree here, have no names of difference; pity it is it should be otherwise anywhere. All that believe have the real unity, which is the most glorious, being the inward and spiritual, in the



Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII.
THE ARMY AND THE PARLIAMENT.
1646-1649.

**Charles and the Presbyterians.**

body and in the head. For being united in forms (commonly called uniformity), every Christian will for peace' sake study and do as far as conscience will permit. And from brethren in things of the mind we look for no compulsion but that of light and reason."

The increasing firmness of Cromwell's language was due to the growing irritation of his Presbyterian opponents. The two parties became every day more clearly defined. The Presbyterian ministers complained bitterly of the increase of the sectaries, and denounced the existing toleration. Scotland, whose army was still before Newark, pressed for the execution of the Covenant and the universal enforcement of a Presbyterian uniformity. Sir Harry Vane, on the other hand, was striving to bring the Parliament round to less rigid courses by the introduction of two hundred and thirty new members, who filled the seats left vacant by Royalist secessions, and the more eminent of whom, such as Ireton and Algernon Sidney, were inclined to the Independents. The pressure of the New Model, and the remonstrances of Cromwell as its mouthpiece, hindered any effective movement towards persecution. Amidst the wreck of his fortunes Charles intrigued busily with both parties, and promised liberty of worship to Vane and the Independents, at the moment when he was negotiating for a refuge with the Presbyterian Scots. His negotiations were quickened by the march of Fairfax upon Oxford. Driven from his last refuge, the King after some aimless wanderings made his appearance in the camp of the Scots. Lord Leven at once fell back with his Royal prize on Newcastle. The *May* 1646. new aspect of affairs threatened the party of religious freedom with ruin. Hated as they were, by the Scots, by the Lords, by the city of London, the apparent junction of Charles with their enemies destroyed their growing hopes in the Commons, where the prospects of a speedy peace on Presbyterian terms at once swelled the majority of their opponents. The two Houses laid their conditions of peace before the King without a dream of resistance from one who seemed to have placed himself at their mercy. They required for the Parliament the command of the army and fleet for twenty years; the exclusion of all "Malignants," or Royalists who had taken part in the war, from civil and military office; the abolition of Episcopacy; and the establishment of a Presbyterian Church. Of toleration or liberty of conscience they said not a word. The Scots pressed these terms on the King "with tears;" his Royalist friends, and even the Queen, urged their acceptance. But the aim of Charles was simply delay. Time and the dissensions of his enemies, as he believed, were fighting for him. "I am not without hope," he wrote coolly, "that I shall be able to draw either the Presbyterians or the Independents to side with me for extirpating one another, so that I shall be really King again." His refusal of the terms offered by the Houses was a defeat for the Presbyterians. "What will become of us," asked one of them, "now that the King has rejected our

Digitized by Google

proposals?" "What would have become of us," retorted an Independent, "had he accepted them?" The vigour of Holles and the Conservative leaders in the Parliament rallied however to a bolder effort. While the Scotch army lay at Newcastle they could not insist on dismissing their own. But the withdrawal of the Scots from England would not only place the King's person in the hands of the Houses, but enable them to free themselves from the pressure of their own soldiers by disbanding the New Model. Hopeless of success with the King, and unable to bring him into Scotland in face of the refusal of the General Assembly to receive a sovereign who would not swear to the Covenant, the Scottish army accepted £400,000 in discharge of its claims, handed Charles over to a committee of the Houses, and marched back over the Border. Masters of the King, the Presbyterian *Feb. 1647.* leaders at once moved boldly to their attack on the Sectaries. They voted that the army should be disbanded, and that a new army should be raised for the suppression of the Irish rebellion with strictly Presbyterian officers at its head. It was in vain that the men protested against being severed from "officers that we love," and that the Council of Officers strove to gain time by pressing on the Parliament the danger of mutiny. Holles and his fellow leaders were resolute, and their ecclesiastical legislation showed the end at which their resolution aimed. Direct enforcement of conformity was impossible till the New Model was disbanded; but the Parliament pressed on in the work of providing the machinery for enforcing it as soon as the army was gone. Vote after vote ordered the setting up of Presbyteries throughout the country, and the first fruits of these efforts were seen in the Presbyterian organization of London, and in the first meeting of its Synod at St. Paul's. Even the officers on Fairfax's staff were ordered to take the Covenant.

**The Army and the Parliament.**

All hung however on the disbanding of the New Model, and the New Model showed no will to disband itself. Its new attitude can only fairly be judged by remembering what the conquerors of Naseby really were. They were soldiers of a different class and of a different temper from the soldiers of any other army that the world has seen. Their ranks were filled for the most part with young farmers and tradesmen of the lower sort, maintaining themselves, for their pay was twelvemonths in arrear, mainly at their own cost. They had been specially picked as "honest," or religious men, and, whatever enthusiasm or fanaticism they may have shown, their very enemies acknowledged the order and piety of their camp. They looked on themselves not as swordsmen, to be caught up and flung away at the will of a paymaster, but as men who had left farm and merchandise at a direct call from God. A great work had been given them to do, and the call bound them till it was done. Kingcraft, as Charles was hoping, might yet restore tyranny to the throne. A



Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII.
THE ARMY AND THE PARLIAMENT.
1646-1649.

more immediate danger threatened that liberty of conscience which was to them "the ground of the quarrel, and for which so many of their friends' lives had been lost, and so much of their own blood has been spilt." They would wait before disbanding till these liberties were secured, and if need came they would again act to secure them. But their resolve sprang from no pride in the brute force of the sword they wielded. On the contrary, as they pleaded passionately at the bar of the Commons, "on becoming soldiers we have not ceased to be citizens." Their aims and proposals throughout were purely those of citizens, and of citizens who were ready the moment their aim was won to return peacefully to their homes. Thought and discussion had turned the army into a vast Parliament, a Parliament which regarded itself as the representatives of "godly" men in as high a degree as the Parliament at Westminster, and which must have become every day more conscious of its superiority in political capacity to its rival. Ireton, the moving spirit of the New Model, had no equal as a statesman in St. Stephen's: nor is it possible to compare the large and far-sighted proposals of the army with the blind and narrow policy of the two Houses. Whatever we may think of the means by which the New Model sought its aims, we must in justice remember that, so far as those aims went, the New Model was in the right. For the last two hundred years England has been doing little more than carrying out in a slow and tentative way the scheme of political and religious reform which the army propounded at the close of the Civil War. It was not till the rejection of the officers' proposals had left little hope of conciliation that the army acted, but its action was quick and decisive. It set aside for all political purposes the Council of Officers, and elected a new Council of Adjutators or Assistants, two members being named by each regiment, which summoned a general meeting of the army at Triploe Heath, where the proposals of pay and disbanding made by the Parliament were rejected with cries of "Justice." While the army was gathering, in fact, the Adjutators had taken a step which put submission out of the question. A rumour that the King was to be removed to London, a new army raised, a new civil war begun, roused the soldiers to madness. Five hundred troopers suddenly appeared before Holmby House, where the King was residing in charge of the Parliamentary Commissioners, and displaced its guards.

*June* 1647. "Where is your commission for this act?" Charles asked the cornet who commanded them. "It is behind me," said Joyce, pointing to his soldiers. "It is written in very fine and legible characters," laughed the King. The seizure had in fact been previously concerted between Charles and the Adjutators. "I will part willingly," he told Joyce, "if the soldiers confirm all that you have promised me. You will exact from me nothing that offends my conscience or my honour." "It is not our maxim," replied the cornet, "to constrain the conscience of

Digitized by Google

anyone, still less that of our King." After a first burst of terror at the news, the Parliament fell furiously on Cromwell, who had relinquished his command and quitted the army before the close of the war, and had ever since been employed as a mediator between the two parties. The charge of having incited the mutiny fell before his vehement protest, but he was driven to seek refuge with the army, and in three days it was in full march upon London. Its demands were expressed with perfect clearness in an "Humble Representation" which it addressed to the Houses. "We desire a settlement of the Peace of the kingdom and of the liberties of the subject according to the votes and declarations of Parliament. We desire no alteration in the civil government: as little do we desire to interrupt or in the least to intermeddle with the settling of the Presbyterial government." They demanded toleration; but "not to open a way to licentious living under pretence of obtaining ease for tender consciences, we profess, as ever, in these things when the state has made a settlement we have nothing to say, but to submit or suffer." It was with a view to such a settlement that they demanded the expulsion of eleven members from the Commons, with Holles at their head, whom the soldiers charged with stirring up strife between the army and the Parliament, and with a design of renewing the civil war. After fruitless negotiations the terror of the Londoners forced the eleven to withdraw; and the Houses named Commissioners to treat on the questions at issue.

**The Army and the King.**

Though Fairfax and Cromwell had at last been forced from their position as mediators into a hearty co-operation with the army, its political direction rested at this moment with Cromwell's son-in-law, Henry Ireton, and Ireton looked for a real settlement, not to the Parliament, but to the King. "There must be some difference," he urged bluntly, "between conquerors and conquered;" but the terms which he laid before Charles were terms of studied moderation. The vindictive spirit which the Parliament had shown against the Royalists and the Church disappeared in the terms he laid before the King; and the army contented itself with the banishment of seven leading "delinquents," a general Act of Oblivion for the rest, the withdrawal of all coercive power from the clergy, the control of Parliament over the military and naval forces for ten years, and its nomination of the great officers of State. Behind these demands however came the masterly and comprehensive plan of political reform which had already been sketched by the army in the "Humble Representation," with which it had begun its march on London. Belief and worship were to be free to all. Acts enforcing the use of the Prayer-book, or attendance at Church, or the enforcement of the Covenant were to be repealed. Even Papists, whatever other restraints might be imposed, were to be freed from the bondage of compulsory worship. Parlia-

Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII.
THE ARMY AND THE PARLIAMENT.
1646-1649.

ments were to be triennial, and the House of Commons to be reformed by a fairer distribution of seats and of electoral rights; taxation was to be readjusted; legal procedure simplified; a crowd of political, commercial, and judicial privileges abolished. Ireton believed that Charles could be "so managed" (says Mrs. Hutchinson) "as to comply with the public good of his people after he could no longer uphold his violent will." But Charles was equally dead to the moderation and to the wisdom of this great Act of Settlement. He saw in the crisis nothing but an opportunity of balancing one party against another; and believed that the army had more need of his aid than he of the army's. "You cannot do without me—you are lost if I do not support you," he said to Ireton as he pressed his proposals. "You have an intention to be the arbitrator between us and the Parliament," Ireton quietly replied, "and we mean to be so between the Parliament and your Majesty." But the King's tone was soon explained by a rising of the London mob which broke into the House of Commons, and forced its members to recall the eleven. While fourteen peers and a hundred Commoners fled to the army, those who remained at Westminster prepared for an open struggle with it, and invited Charles to return to London. But the army was again on the march. "In two days," Cromwell said coolly, "the city will be in our hands." The soldiers entered London in triumph, and restored the fugitive members; the eleven were again expelled, and the army leaders resumed negotiations with the King. The indignation of the soldiers at his delays and intrigues made the task hourly more difficult; but Cromwell, who now threw his whole weight on Ireton's side, clung to the hope of accommodation with a passionate tenacity. His mind, conservative by tradition, and above all practical in temper, saw the political difficulties which would follow on the abolition of Royalty, and in spite of the King's evasions he persisted in negotiating with him. But Cromwell stood almost alone; the Parliament refused to accept Ireton's proposals as a basis of peace, Charles still evaded, and the army then grew restless and suspicious. There were cries for a wide reform, for the abolition of the House of Peers, for a new House of Commons; and the Adjutators called on the Council of Officers to discuss the question of abolishing Royalty itself. Cromwell was never braver than when he faced the gathering storm, forbade the discussion, adjourned the Council, and sent the officers to their regiments. But the strain was too great to last long, and Charles was still resolute to "play his game." He was in fact so far from being in earnest in his negotiations with Cromwell and Ireton, that at the moment they were risking their lives for him he was conducting another and equally delusive negotiation with the Parliament, fomenting the discontent in London, preparing for a fresh Royalist rising, and for an invasion of the Scots in his favour. "The two nations," he wrote joyously, "will soon be at war." All that was needed

*Nov.* 1647.

Digitized by Google

for the success of his schemes was his own liberty; and in the midst of his hopes of an accommodation Cromwell found with astonishment that he had been duped throughout, and that the King had fled.

The flight fanned the excitement of the army into frenzy, and only the courage of Cromwell averted an open mutiny in its gathering at Ware. But even Cromwell was powerless to break the spirit which now pervaded the soldiers, and the King's perfidy left him without resource. "The King is a man of great parts and great understanding," he said at last, "but so great a dissembler and so false a man that he is not to be trusted." By a strange error Charles had made his way from Hampton Court to the Isle of Wight, perhaps with some hope from the sympathy of Colonel Hammond, the Governor of Carisbrook Castle, and again found himself a prisoner. Foiled in his effort to put himself at the head of the new civil war, he set himself to organize it from his prison; and while again opening delusive negotiations with the Parliament, he signed a secret treaty with the Scots for the invasion of the realm. The rise of Independency, and the practical suspension of the Covenant, had produced a violent reaction in his favour north of the Tweed. The nobles gathered round the Duke of Hamilton, and carried the elections against Argyle and the adherents of the Parliament; and on the King's consenting to a stipulation for the re-establishment of Presbytery in England, they ordered an army to be levied for his support. In England the whole of the conservative party, with many of the most conspicuous members of the Long Parliament at its head, was drifting, in its horror of the religious and political changes which seemed impending, towards the King; and the news from Scotland gave the signal for fitful insurrections in almost every quarter. London was only held down by main force, old officers of the Parliament unfurled the Royal flag in South Wales, and surprised Pembroke. The seizure of Berwick and Carlisle opened a way for the Scotch invasion. Kent, Essex, and Hertford broke out in revolt. The fleet in the Downs sent their captains on shore, hoisted the King's pennon, and blockaded the Thames. "The hour is come for the Parliament to save the kingdom and to govern alone," cried Cromwell; but the Parliament only showed itself eager to take advantage of the crisis to profess its adherence to Royalty, to re-open the negotiations it had broken off with the King, and to deal the fiercest blow at religious freedom which it had ever received. The Presbyterians flocked back to their seats; and an "Ordinance for the suppression of Blasphemies and Heresies," which Vane and Cromwell had long held at bay, was passed by triumphant majorities. Any man—runs this terrible statute—denying the doctrine of the Trinity or of the Divinity of Christ, or that the books of Scripture are not "the Word of God," or the resurrection of the body, or a future day of judgment, and refusing on trial to abjure his heresy, "shall

Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII.
THE ARMY AND THE PARLIAMENT.
1646-1649.

suffer the pain of death." Any man declaring (amidst a long list of other errors) "that man by nature hath free will to turn to God," that there is a Purgatory, that images are lawful, that infant baptism is unlawful; any one denying the obligation of observing the Lord's day, or asserting "that the Church government by Presbytery is anti-Christian or unlawful," shall on a refusal to renounce his errors "be commanded to prison." It was plain that the Presbyterian party counted on the King's success to resume its policy of conformity, and had Charles been free, or the New Model disbanded, its hopes would probably have been realized. But Charles, though eager to escape, was still safe at Carisbrook; and the New Model was facing fiercely the danger which surrounded it. The wanton renewal of the war at a moment when all tended to peace swept from the mind of Fairfax and Cromwell, as from that of the army at large, every thought of reconciliation with the King. Soldiers and generals were at last bound together again in a stern resolve. On the eve of their march against the revolt all gathered in a solemn prayer-meeting, and came "to a very clear and joint resolution, 'That it was our duty, if ever the Lord brought us back again in peace, to call Charles Stuart, that man of blood, to account for the blood he has shed and mischief he has done to his utmost against the Lord's cause and people in this poor nation.'" In three days Fairfax had trampled out the Kentish insurrection, and had pr[illegible]oned that of the eastern counties within the walls of Colchester, while Cromwell drove the Welsh insurgents within those of Pembroke. Both the towns however held stubbornly out; and though a Royalist rising under Lord Holland in the neighbourhood of London was easily put down, there was no force left to stem the inroad of the Scots, who were pouring over the Border some twenty thousand strong. Luckily the surrender of Pembroke at the critical moment set Cromwell free. Pushing rapidly northward with five thousand men, he called in the force under Lambert which had been gallantly hanging on the Scottish flank, and pushed over the Yorkshire hills into the valley of the Ribble. The Duke of Hamilton, reinforced by three thousand Royalists of the north, had advanced as far as Preston. With an army which now numbered ten thousand men, Cromwell poured down on the flank of the Duke's straggling line of march, attacked the Scots as they retired behind the Ribble, passed the river with them, cut their rearguard to pieces at Wigan, forced the defile at Warrington, where the flying enemy made a last and desperate stand, and forced their foot to surrender, while Lambert hunted down Hamilton and the horse. Fresh from its victory, the New Model pushed over the Border, while the peasants of Ayrshire and the west rose in the "Whiggamore raid" (notable as the first event in which we find the name "Whig," which is possibly the same as our "Whey," and conveys a taunt against the "sour-milk" faces of the fanatical

*Aug.* 18, 1648.

Digitized by Google

Ayrshiremen), and, marching upon Edinburgh, dispersed the Royalist party and again installed Argyle in power.

Argyle welcomed Cromwell as a deliverer, but the victorious general had hardly entered Edinburgh when he was recalled by pressing news from the south. The temper with which the Parliament had met the Royalist revolt was, as we have seen, widely different from that of the army. It had recalled the eleven members, and had passed the Ordinance against heresy. At the moment of the victory at Preston the Lords were discussing charges of treason against Cromwell, while commissioners had again been sent to the Isle of Wight, in spite of the resistance of the Independents, to conclude peace with the King. Royalists and Presbyterians alike pressed Charles to grasp the easy terms which were now offered him. But his hopes from Scotland had only broken down to give place to hopes of a new war with the aid of an army from Ireland; and the negotiations saw forty days wasted in useless chicanery. "Nothing," Charles wrote to his friends, "is changed in my designs." But at this moment the surrender of Colchester and the convention with Argyle set free the army, and petitions from its regiments at once demanded "justice on the King." A fresh "Remonstrance" from the Council of Officers called for the election of a new Parliament; for electoral reform; for the recognition of the supremacy of the Parliament "in all things;" for the change of kingship, should it be retained, into a magistracy elected by the Parliament, and without veto on its proceedings; and demanded above all "that the capital and grand author of our troubles, by whose commissions, commands, and procurements, and in whose behalf and for whose interest only, of will and power, all our wars and troubles have been, with all the miseries attending them, may be specially brought to justice for the treason, blood, and mischief he is therein guilty of." The reply of the Parliament to this Remonstrance was to accept the King's concessions, unimportant as they were, as a basis of peace. The step was accepted by the soldiers as a defiance: Charles was again seized by a troop of horse, and carried off to Hurst Castle; while a letter from Fairfax announced the march of his army upon London. "We shall know now," said Vane, as the troops took their post round the Houses of Parliament, "who is on the side of the King, and who on the side of the people." But the terror of the army proved weaker among their members than the agonized loyalty which strove to save Charles, and an immense majority in both Houses still voted for the acceptance of the terms he had offered. The next morning saw Colonel Pride at the door of the House of Commons with a list of forty members of the majority in his hands. The Council of Officers had resolved to exclude them, and as each member made his appearance he was arrested, and put in confinement. "By what right do you

Digitized by Google

Sec. VIII. The Army and the Parliament. 1646–1649.

act?" a member asked. "By the right of the sword," Hugh Peters is said to have replied. The House was still resolute, but on the following morning forty more members were excluded, and the rest gave way. The formal expulsion of one hundred and forty members left the Independents, who alone remained, free to co-operate with the army which had delivered them; the peace votes were at once rescinded; the removal of Charles to Windsor was followed by an instant resolution for his trial, and by the nomination of a Court of one hundred and fifty Commissioners to conduct it, with John Bradshaw, a lawyer of eminence, at their head. The rejection of this Ordinance by the few peers who remained brought about a fresh resolution from the lower House, "that the People are, under God, the original of all just power; that the Commons of England in Parliament assembled—being chosen by, and representing, the People—have the supreme power in this nation; and that whatsoever is enacted and declared for law by the Commons in Parliament assembled hath the force of a law, and all the people of this nation are concluded thereby, although the consent and concurrence of the King or House of Peers be not had thereunto."

Charles appeared before the Court only to deny its competence and to refuse to plead; but thirty-two witnesses were examined to satisfy the consciences of his judges, and it was not till the fifth day of the trial that he was condemned to death as a tyrant, traitor, murderer, and enemy of his country. The popular excitement had vented itself in cries of "Justice," or "God save your Majesty," as the trial went on, but all save the loud outcries of the soldiers was hushed as Charles passed to receive his doom. The dignity which he had failed to preserve in his long jangling with Bradshaw and the judges returned at the call of death. Whatever had been the faults and follies of his life, "he nothing common did, or mean, upon that memorable scene." Two masked executioners awaited the King as he mounted the scaffold, which had been erected outside one of the windows of the Banqueting House at Whitehall; the streets and roofs were thronged with spectators; and a strong body of soldiers stood drawn up beneath. His head fell at the first blow, and as the executioner lifted it to the sight of all a groan of pity and horror burst from the silent crowd.

*Jan. 30, 1649.*

### Section IX.—The Commonwealth. 1649–1653.

[*Authorities.*—Rushworth's collection ceases with the King's Trial; Whitelock and Ludlow continue as before, and must be supplemented by the Parliamentary History and the State Trials. Special lives of Vane and Martyn will be found in Mr. Forster's "Statesmen of the Commonwealth," and a vigorous defence of the Council of State in the "History of the Commonwealth," by Mr. Bisset. For Irish affairs we have a vast store of materials in the Ormond

Digitized by Google

Papers and Letters collected by Carte, to which we may add Cromwell's despatches in Carlyle's "Letters." The account given by Mr. Carlyle of the Scotch war is perhaps the most valuable portion of his work. The foreign politics and wars of this period are admirably illustrated with a copious appendix of documents by M. Guizot ("Republic and Cromwell," vol. i.), whose account of the whole period is the fairest and best for the general reader. A biography of Blake has been published by Mr. Hepworth Dixon.]

---

**The Council of State.**

The news of the King's death was received throughout Europe with a thrill of horror. The Czar of Russia chased the English envoy from his court. The ambassador of France was withdrawn on the proclamation of the Republic. The Protestant powers of the Continent seemed more anxious than any to disavow all connection with the Protestant people who had brought a King to the block. Holland took the lead in acts of open hostility to the new power as soon as the news of the execution reached the Hague; the States-General waited solemnly on the Prince of Wales, who took the title of Charles the Second, and recognized him as "Majesty," while they refused an audience to the English envoys. Their Stadtholder, his brother-in-law, the Prince of Orange, was supported by popular sympathy in the aid and encouragement he afforded to Charles; and the eleven ships of the English fleet, which had found a refuge at the Hague ever since their revolt from the Parliament, were suffered to sail under Rupert's command on an errand of sheer piracy, though with a Royal commission, and to render the seas unsafe for English traders. The danger, however, was far greater nearer home. The Scots proclaimed Charles the Second as their King on the news of his father's death, and at once despatched an embassy to the Hague to invite him to ascend the throne. Ormond, who had at last succeeded in uniting the countless factions who ever since the Rebellion had turned Ireland into a chaos, the old Irish Catholics or native party under Owen Roe O'Neil, the Catholics of the English Pale, the Episcopalian Royalists, the Presbyterial Royalists of the north, called on Charles to land at once in a country where he would find three-fourths of its people devoted to his cause. Nor was the danger from without met by resolution and energy on the part of the diminished Parliament which remained the sole depositary of legal powers. The Commons entered on their new task with hesitation and delay. More than a month passed after the King's execution before the Monarchy was formally abolished, and the government of the nation provided for by the creation of a Council of State consisting of forty-one members selected from the Commons, who were entrusted with full executive power at home or abroad. Two months more elapsed before the passing of the memorable Act which declared "that the People of England and of all the dominions and territories thereunto belonging are, and shall be, and are hereby

Digitized by Google

SEC. IX. THE COMMONWEALTH. 1649-1653.

constituted, made, established, and confirmed to be a Commonwealth and Free State, and shall henceforward be governed as a Commonwealth and Free State by the supreme authority of this nation, the Representatives of the People in Parliament, and by such as they shall appoint and constitute officers and ministers for the good of the people, and that without any King or House of Lords."

**The Rump and the Army.**

Of the dangers which threatened the new Commonwealth some were more apparent than real. The rivalry of France and Spain, both anxious for its friendship, secured it from the hostility of the greater powers of the Continent, and the ill-will of Holland could be delayed, if not averted, by negotiations. The acceptance of the Covenant was insisted on by Scotland before it would formally receive Charles as its ruler, and nothing but necessity would induce him to comply with such a demand. On the side of Ireland the danger was more pressing, and an army of twelve thousand men was set apart for a vigorous prosecution of the Irish war. The Commonwealth found considerable difficulties at home. The death of Charles gave fresh vigour to the Royalist cause, and the new loyalty was stirred to enthusiasm by the publication of the "Eikon Basilike," a work really due to the ingenuity of Dr. Gauden, a Presbyterian minister, but which was believed to have been composed by the King himself in his later hours of captivity, and which reflected with admirable skill the hopes, the suffering, and the piety of the Royal "martyr." The dreams of a rising were roughly checked by the execution of the Duke of Hamilton and Lords Holland and Capell, who had till now been confined in the Tower. But the popular disaffection told even on the Council of State. A majority of its members declined the oath offered to them at their earliest meeting, pledging them to an approval of the King's death and the establishment of the Commonwealth. Half the judges retired from the bench. Thousands of refusals met the demand of an engagement to be faithful to the Republic which was made from all beneficed clergymen and public functionaries. It was not till May, and even then in spite of the ill-will of the citizens, that the Council ventured to proclaim the Commonwealth in London. A yet more formidable peril lay in the selfishness of the Parliament itself. It was now a mere fragment of the House of Commons; the members of the Rump—as it was contemptuously called—numbered hardly a hundred, and of those the average attendance was little more than fifty. In reducing it by "Pride's Purge" to the mere shadow of a House the army had never dreamt of its continuance as a permanent assembly: it had, in fact, insisted as a condition of even its temporary continuance that it should prepare a bill for the summoning of a fresh Parliament. The plan put forward by the Council of Officers is still interesting as the base of many later efforts towards parliamentary reform; it advised a dissolution in the spring, the assembling every two years of a new

Digitized by Google

Parliament consisting of four hundred members, elected by all householders rateable to the poor, and a redistribution of seats which would have given the privilege of representation to all places of importance. Paid military officers and civil officials were excluded from election. The plan was apparently accepted by the Commons, and a bill based on it was again and again discussed; but there was a suspicion that no serious purpose of its own dissolution was entertained by the House. The popular discontent at once found a mouthpiece in John Lilburne, a brave, hot-headed soldier, and the excitement of the army appeared suddenly in a formidable mutiny. "You must cut these people in pieces," Cromwell burst out in the Council of State, "or they will cut you in pieces;" and a forced march of fifty miles to Burford enabled him to burst on the mutinous regiments at midnight, and to stamp out the revolt. But resolute as he was against disorder, Cromwell went honestly with the army in its demand of a new Parliament; he believed, and in his harangue to the mutineers he pledged himself to the assertion, that the House purposed to dissolve itself. Within the House, however, a vigorous knot of politicians was resolved to prolong its existence; and in a witty paraphrase of the story of Moses, Henry Martyn had already pictured the Commonwealth as a new-born and delicate babe, and hinted that "no one is so proper to bring it up as the mother who has brought it into the world." As yet, however, their intentions were kept secret, and in spite of the delays thrown in the way of the bill for a new Representative body Cromwell entertained no serious suspicion of such a design, when he was summoned to Ireland by a series of Royalist successes which left only Dublin in the hands of the Parliamentary forces.

**The Conquest of Ireland.**

With Scotland threatening war, and a naval struggle impending with Holland, it was necessary that the work of the army in Ireland should be done quickly. The temper, too, of Cromwell and his soldiers was one of vengeance, for the horror of the Irish Massacre remained living in every English breast, and the revolt was looked upon as a continuance of the Massacre. "We are come," he said on his landing, "to ask an account of the innocent blood that hath been shed, and to endeavour to bring to an account all who by appearing in arms shall justify the same." A sortie from Dublin had already broken up Ormond's siege of the capital; and feeling himself powerless to keep the field before the new army, the Marquess had thrown his best troops, three thousand Englishmen under Sir Arthur Aston, as a garrison into Drogheda. The storm of Drogheda was the first of a series of awful massacres. The garrison fought bravely, and repulsed the first attack; but a second drove Aston and his force back to the Mill-Mount. "Our men getting up to them," ran Cromwell's terrible despatch, "were ordered by me to put them all to the sword. And indeed, being in the heat of action, I forbade them to spare any that

*Aug.* 1640.

Digitized by Google

SEC. IX.
THE COMMONWEALTH.
1649-1653.

were in arms in the town, and I think that night they put to death about two thousand men." A few fled to St. Peter's church, "whereupon I ordered the steeple to be burned, where one of them was heard to say in the midst of the flames : 'God damn me, I burn, I burn.'" "In the church itself nearly one thousand were put to the sword. I believe all their friars were knocked on the head promiscuously but two," but these were the sole exceptions to the rule of killing the soldiers only. At a later time Cromwell challenged his enemies to give "an instance of one man since my coming into Ireland, not in arms, massacred, destroyed, or burnt." But for soldiers there was no mercy. Of the remnant who surrendered through hunger, "when they submitted, their officers were knocked on the head, every tenth man of the soldiers killed, and the rest shipped for the Barbadoes." "I am persuaded," the despatch ends, "that this is a righteous judgment of God upon these barbarous wretches who have imbrued their hands in so much innocent blood, and that it will tend to prevent the effusion of blood for the future." A detachment sufficed to relieve Derry, and to quiet Ulster ; and Cromwell turned to the south, where as stout a defence was followed by as terrible a massacre at Wexford. Fresh successes at Ross and Kilkenny brought him to Waterford ; but the city held stubbornly out, disease thinned his army, where there was scarce an officer who had not been sick, and the general himself was arrested by illness, and at last the tempestuous weather drove him into winter quarters at Cork with his work half done. The winter was one of terrible anxiety. The Parliament showed less and less inclination to dissolve itself, and met the growing discontent by a stricter censorship of the press and a fruitless prosecution of John Lilburne. English commerce was ruined by the piracies of Rupert's fleet, which now anchored at Kinsale to support the Royalist cause in Ireland. The energy of Vane indeed had already re-created a navy, squadrons were being despatched into the British seas, the Mediterranean, and the Levant, and Colonel Blake, who had distinguished himself by his heroic defence of Taunton during the war, was placed at the head of a fleet which drove Rupert from the Irish coast, and finally blockaded him in the Tagus. But even the energy of Vane quailed before the danger from the Scots. "One must go and die there," the young King cried at the news of Ormond's defeat before Dublin, "for it is shameful for me to live elsewhere." But his ardour for an Irish campaign cooled as Cromwell marched from victory to victory ; and from the isle of Jersey, which alone remained faithful to him of all his southern dominions, Charles renewed the negotiations with Scotland which his hopes from Ireland had broken. They were again delayed by a proposal on the part of Montrose to attack the very Government with whom his master was negotiating ; but the failure and death of the Marquis in the spring forced Charles to accept the Presbyterian con-

Digitized by Google

ditions. The news of the negotiations at Breda filled the Parliament with dismay, for Scotland was raising an army, and Fairfax, while willing to defend England against a Scotch invasion, scrupled to take the lead in an invasion of Scotland. The Council recalled Cromwell from Ireland, but his cooler head saw that there was yet time to finish his work in the west. During the winter he had been busily preparing for a new campaign, and it was only after the storm of Clonmell, and the overthrow of the Irish army under Hugh O'Neile in the hottest fight the army had yet fought, that he embarked his soldiers for England.

**Dunbar and Worcester.** *May* 1650.

Cromwell entered London amidst the shouts of a great multitude; and a month later, as Charles landed on the shores of Scotland, the English army started for the north. It crossed the Tweed, fifteen thousand men strong; but the terror of the Irish massacres hung round its leader, the country was deserted as he advanced, and he was forced to cling for provisions to the fleet which sailed along the coast. Leslie, with a larger force, refused battle and lay obstinately in his lines between Edinburgh and Leith; a march of the English army round his position to the slopes of the Pentlands only brought about a change of the Scottish front; and as Cromwell fell back baffled upon Dunbar, Leslie encamped upon the heights above the town, and cut off the English retreat along the coast by the seizure of Cockburnspath. His post was almost unassailable, while the soldiers of Cromwell fell fast with disease; and their general had resolved on an embarcation of his forces, when he saw in the dusk of evening signs of movement in the Scottish camp. Leslie's caution had at last been overpowered by the zeal of the preachers, and his army moved down to the lower ground between the hillside on which it was encamped and a little brook which covered the English front. His horse was far in advance of the main body, and it had hardly reached the level ground when Cromwell in the dim dawn flung his whole force upon it. "They run, I profess they run!" he cried as the Scotch horse broke after a desperate resistance, and threw into confusion the foot who were hurrying to their aid. Then, as the sun rose over the mist of the morning, he added in nobler words: "Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered! Like as the mist vanisheth, so shalt Thou drive them away!" In less than an hour the victory was complete. The defeat at once became a rout; ten thousand prisoners were taken, with all the baggage and guns; three thousand were slain, with scarce any loss on the part of the conquerors. Leslie reached Edinburgh, a general without an army. The effect of Dunbar was at once seen in the attitude of the Continental powers. Spain hastened to recognize the Republic, and Holland offered its alliance. But Cromwell was watching with anxiety the growing discontent at home. The general amnesty claimed by Ireton and the bill for the Parliament's dissolution still

*Sept.* 3, 1650.

Digitized by Google

hung on hand; the reform of the courts of justice, which had been pressed by the army, failed before the obstacles thrown in its way by the lawyers in the Commons. "Relieve the oppressed," Cromwell wrote from Dunbar, "hear the groans of poor prisoners. Be pleased to reform the abuses of all professions. If there be any one that makes many poor to make a few rich, that suits not a Commonwealth." But the Parliament was seeking to turn the current of public opinion in favour of its own continuance by a great diplomatic triumph. It resolved secretly on the wild project of bringing about a union between England and Holland, and it took advantage of Cromwell's victory to despatch Oliver St. John with a stately embassy to the Hague. His rejection of the alliance and Treaty of Commerce which the Dutch offered were followed by the disclosure of the English proposal of union; but the proposal was at once rejected. The envoys, who returned angrily to the Parliament, attributed their failure to the posture of affairs in Scotland, where Charles was preparing for a new campaign. "I believe the King will set up on his own score now," Cromwell had written after Dunbar. Humiliation after humiliation had been heaped on Charles since he landed in his northern realm. He had subscribed to the Covenant; he had listened to sermons and scoldings from the ministers; he had been called on to sign a declaration that acknowledged the tyranny of his father and the idolatry of his mother. Hardened and shameless as he was, the young King for a moment recoiled. "I could never look my mother in the face again," he cried, "after signing such a paper;" but he signed. He was still, however, a King only in name, shut out from the Council and the army, with his friends excluded from all part in government or the war. But he was at once freed by the victory of Dunbar. With the overthrow of Leslie fell the power of Argyle and the narrow Presbyterians whom he led. Hamilton, the brother and successor of the Duke who had been captured at Preston, brought back the Royalists to the camp, and Charles insisted on taking part in the Council and on being crowned at Scone. Master of Edinburgh, but foiled in an attack on Stirling, Cromwell waited through the winter and the long spring, while intestine feuds broke up the nation opposed to him, and while the stricter Covenanters retired sulkily from the Royal army on the return of the "Malignants," the "Royalists" of the earlier war, to its ranks. With summer the campaign recommenced, but Leslie again fell back on his system of positions, and Cromwell, finding his camp at Stirling unassailable, crossed into Fife and left the road open to the south. The bait was taken. In spite of Leslie's counsels Charles resolved to invade England, and was soon in full march through Lancashire upon the Severn, with the English horse under Lambert hanging on his rear, and the English foot hastening to close the road to London by York and Coventry. "We have done to the best of our

Digitized by Google

judgment," Cromwell replied to the angry alarm of the Parliament, "knowing that if some issue were not put to this business it would occasion another winter's war." At Coventry he learnt Charles's position, and swept round by Evesham upon Worcester, where the Scotch King was encamped. Throwing half his force across the river, Cromwell attacked the town on both sides on the anniversary of his victory at Dunbar. He led the van in person, and was "the first to set foot on the enemy's ground." When Charles descended from the Cathedral Tower to fling himself on the eastern division, Cromwell hurried over the river, and was soon "riding in the midst of the fire." For four or five hours, he told the Parliament, "it was as stiff a contest as ever I have seen;" the Scots outnumbered and beaten into the city gave no answer but shot to offers of quarter, and it was not till nightfall that all was over. The loss of the victors was as usual inconsiderable. The conquered lost six thousand men, and all their baggage and artillery. Leslie was among the prisoners: Hamilton among the dead.

*Sep.* 3, 1651.

"Now that the King is dead and his son defeated," Cromwell said gravely to the Parliament, "I think it necessary to come to a settlement." But the settlement which had been promised after Naseby was still as distant as ever after Worcester. The bill for dissolving the present Parliament, though Cromwell pressed it in person, was only passed, after bitter opposition, by a majority of two; and even this success had been purchased by a compromise which permitted the House to sit for three years more. Internal affairs were simply at a dead lock. The Parliament appointed committees to prepare plans for legal reforms, or for ecclesiastical reforms, but it did nothing to carry them into effect. It was overpowered by the crowd of affairs which the confusion of the war had thrown into its hands, by confiscations, sequestrations, appointments to civil and military offices, the whole administration in fact of the state; and there were times when it was driven to a resolve not to take any private affairs for weeks together in order that it might make some progress with public business. To add to this confusion and muddle there were the inevitable scandals which arose from it; charges of malversation and corruption were hurled at the members of the House; and some, like Haslerig, were accused with justice of using their power to further their own interests. The one remedy for all this was, as the army saw, the assembly of a new and complete Parliament in place of the mere "rump" of the old; but this was the one measure which the House was resolute to avert. Vane spurred it to a new activity. The Amnesty Bill was forced through after fifteen divisions. A Grand Committee, with Sir Matthew Hale at its head, was appointed to consider the reform of the law. The union with Scotland was pushed resolutely forward; eight English Commissioners convoked a Convention of delegates from its counties and boroughs at Edinburgh, and in spite of dogged opposition procured a vote in favour

**The Dutch War.**



Digitized by Google

SEC. IX. THE COMMONWEALTH. 1649-1653.

of union. A bill was introduced ratifying the measure, and admitting representatives from Scotland into the next Parliament. A similar plan was soon proposed for a union with Ireland. But it was necessary for Vane's purposes not only to show the energy of the Parliament, but to free it from the control of the army. His aim was to raise in the navy, a force devoted to the House and to eclipse the glories of Dunbar and Worcester by yet greater triumphs at sea. With this view the quarrel with Holland had been carefully nursed; a "Navigation Act" prohibiting the importation in foreign vessels of any but the products of the countries to which they belonged struck a fatal blow at the carrying trade from which the Dutch drew their wealth; and fresh debates arose from the English claim to salutes from all vessels in the Channel. The two fleets met before Dover, and a summons from Blake to lower the Dutch flag was met by the Dutch admiral, Van Tromp, with a broadside. The States-General attributed the collision to accident, and offered to recall Van Tromp; but the English demands rose at each step in the negotiations till war became inevitable. The army hardly needed the warning conveyed by the introduction of a bill for its disbanding to understand the new policy of the Parliament. It was significant that while accepting the bill for its own dissolution the House had as yet prepared no plan for the assembly which was to follow it; and the Dutch war had hardly been declared when, abandoning the attitude of inaction which it had observed since the beginning of the Commonwealth, the army petitioned, not only for reform in Church and State, but for an explicit declaration that the House would bring its proceedings to a close. The Petition forced the House to discuss a bill for "a New Representative," but the discussion soon brought out the resolve of the sitting members to continue as a part of the coming Parliament without re-election. The officers, irritated by such a claim, demanded in conference after conference an immediate dissolution, and the House as resolutely refused. In ominous words Cromwell supported the demand of the army. "As for the members of this Parliament, the army begins to take them in disgust. I would it did so with less reason." There was just ground, he urged, for discontent in their selfish greed of houses and lands, the scandalous lives of many, their partiality as judges, their interference with the ordinary course of law in matters of private interest, their delay of law reform, above all in their manifest design of perpetuating their own power. "There is little to hope for from such men," he ended with a return to his predominant thought, "for a settlement of the nation."

*May* 1652.

**The Ejection of the Rump.**

The crisis was averted for a moment by the events of the war. A terrible storm had separated the two fleets when on the point of engaging in the Orkneys, but Ruyter and Blake met again in the Channel, and after a fierce struggle the Dutch was forced to retire under cover

Digitized by Google

of night. Since the downfall of Spain Holland had been the first naval power in the world, and the spirit of the nation rose gallantly with its earliest defeat. Immense efforts were made to strengthen the fleet, and the veteran, Van Tromp, who was replaced at its head, appeared in the Channel with seventy-three ships of war. Blake had but half the number, but he at once accepted the challenge, and the unequal fight went on doggedly till nightfall, when the English fleet withdrew shattered into the Thames. Tromp swept the Channel in triumph, with a broom at his masthead; and the tone of the House lowered with the defeat of their favourite force. A compromise seems to have been arranged between the two parties, for the bill providing a new Representative was again pushed on; and the Parliament agreed to retire in the coming November, while Cromwell offered no opposition to a reduction of the Army. But the courage of the House rose again with a turn of fortune. The strenuous efforts of Blake enabled him again to put to sea in a few months after his defeat, and a running fight through four days ended at last in an English victory, though Tromp's fine seamanship enabled him to save the convoy he was guarding. The House at once insisted on the retention of its power. Not only were the existing members to continue as members of the New Parliament, depriving the places they represented of their right of choosing representatives, but they were to constitute a Committee of Revision, to determine the validity of each election, and the fitness of the members returned. A conference took place between the leaders of the Commons and the Officers of the Army, who resolutely demanded not only the omission of these clauses, but that the Parliament should at once dissolve itself, and commit the new elections to the Council of State. "Our charge," retorted Haslerig, "cannot be transferred to any one." The conference was adjourned till the next morning, on an understanding that no decisive step should be taken; but it had no sooner re-assembled, than the absence of the leading members confirmed the news that Vane was fast pressing the bill for a new Representative through the House. "It is contrary to common honesty," Cromwell angrily broke out; and, quitting Whitehall, he summoned a company of musketeers to follow him as far as the door of the Commons. He sate down quietly in his place, "clad in plain grey clothes and grey worsted stockings," and listened to Vane's passionate arguments. "I am come to do what grieves me to the heart," he said to his neighbour, St. John, but he still remained quiet, till Vane pressed the House to waive its usual forms and pass the bill at once. "The time has come," he said to Harrison. "Think well," replied Harrison, "it is a dangerous work!" and Cromwell listened for another quarter of an hour. At the question "that this Bill do pass," he at length rose, and his tone grew higher as he repeated his former charges of injustice, self interest, and delay. "Your hour is come," he ended, "the Lord hath done with

*Nov.* 30, 1652

*Feb.* 1653.



Digitized by Google

SEC. IX. THE COMMONWEALTH. 1649-1653.

you!" A crowd of members started to their feet in angry protest. "Come, come," replied Cromwell, "we have had enough of this;" and striding into the midst of the chamber, he clapt his hat on his head, and exclaimed, "I will put an end to your prating!" In the din that followed his voice was heard in broken sentences—"It is not fit that you should sit here any longer! You should give place to better men! You are no Parliament." Thirty musketeers entered at a sign from their General, and the fifty members present crowded to the door. "Drunkard!" Cromwell broke out as Wentworth passed him; and Martin was taunted with a yet coarser name. Vane, fearless to the last, told him his act was "against all right and all honour." "Ah, Sir Harry Vane, Sir Harry Vane," Cromwell retorted in bitter indignation at the trick he had been played. "You might have prevented all this, but you are a juggler, and have no common honesty! The Lord deliver me from Sir Harry Vane!" The Speaker refused to quit his seat, till Harrison offered to "lend him a hand to come down." Cromwell lifted the mace from the table. "What shall we do with this bauble?" he said. "Take it away!" The door of the house was locked at last, and the dispersion of the Parliament was followed a few hours after by that of its executive committee, the Council of State. Cromwell himself summoned them to withdraw. "We have heard," replied a member, John Bradshaw, "what you have done this morning at the House, and in some hours all England will hear it. But you mistake, sir, if you think the Parliament dissolved. No power on earth can dissolve the Parliament but itself, be sure of that!"

*April* 19, 1653.

## Section X.—The Fall of Puritanism. 1653—1660.

[*Authorities.*—Many of the works mentioned before are still valuable, but the real key to the history of this period lies in Cromwell's remarkable series of Speeches (Carlyle, "Letters and Speeches," vol. iii.). Thurloe's State Papers furnish an immense mass of documents. For the Second Parliament of the Protector we have Burton's "Diary." M. Guizot's "Cromwell and the Republic" is the best modern account of the time, and especially valuable for the foreign transactions of the Protectorate. For the Restoration, see his "Richard Cromwell and the Restoration," Ludlow's "Memoirs," Baxter's "Autobiography," and the Clarendon State Papers, with the minute and accurate account given by Clarendon himself.]

**The Puritan Convention.**

The dispersion both of the Parliament and of its executive commission left England without a government, for the authority of every official ended with that of the body from which his power was derived. Cromwell, in fact, as Captain-General of the forces, found himself left solely responsible for the maintenance of public order. But no thought of military despotism can be fairly traced in the acts of the general or the army. They were in fact far from regarding their position as a

Digitized by Google

revolutionary one. Though incapable of justification on any formal ground, their proceedings had as yet been substantially in vindication of the older constitution, and the opinion of the nation had gone fully with the army in its demand for a full and efficient body of representatives, as well as in its resistance to the project by which the Rump would have deprived half England of its rights of election. It was only when no other means existed of preventing such a wrong that the soldiers had driven out the wrongdoers. "It is you that have forced me to this," Cromwell exclaimed, as he drove the members from the House; "I have sought the Lord night and day that He would rather slay me than put me upon the doing of this work." The act was one of violence to the members of the House, but the act which it aimed at preventing was one of violence on their part to the constitutional rights of the whole nation. The people had in fact been "dissatisfied in every corner of the realm" at the state of public affairs: and the expulsion of the members was ratified by a general assent. "We did not hear a dog bark at their going," the Protector said years afterwards. Whatever anxiety may have been felt at the use which was like to be made of "the power of the sword," was at once dispelled by a proclamation of the officers. Their one anxiety was "not to grasp the power ourselves nor to keep it in military hands, no not for a day," and their promise to "call to the government men of approved fidelity and honesty" was redeemed by the nomination of a new Council of State, consisting of eight officers of high rank and four civilians, with Cromwell as their head, and a seat in which was offered, though fruitlessly, to Vane. The first business of such a body was clearly to summon a new Parliament and to resign its trust into its hands: but the bill for Parliamentary reform had dropped with the expulsion: and reluctant as the Council was to summon the new Parliament on the old basis of election, it shrank from the responsibility of effecting so fundamental a change as the creation of a new basis by its own authority. It was this difficulty which led to the expedient of a Constituent Convention. Cromwell told the story of this unlucky assembly some years after with an amusing frankness. "I will come and tell you a story of my own weakness and folly. And yet it was done in my simplicity—I dare avow it was. . . . It was thought then that men of our own judgment, who had fought in the wars, and were all of a piece on that account—why, surely, these men will hit it, and these men will do it to the purpose, whatever can be desired! And surely we did think, and I did think so—the more blame to me!" Of the hundred and fifty-six men, "faithful, fearing God, and hating covetousness," whose names were selected for this purpose by the Council of State, from lists furnished by the congregational churches, the bulk were men, like Ashley Cooper, of good blood and "free estates;" and the proportion of burgesses, such as the leather-merchant, Praise-God

Digitized by Google

SEC. X.
THE FALL OF PURITANISM.
1653-1660.

Barebones, whose name was eagerly seized on as a nickname for the body to which he belonged, seems to have been much the same as in earlier Parliaments. But the circumstances of their choice told fatally on the temper of its members. Cromwell himself, in the burst of rugged eloquence with which he welcomed their assembling, was carried away by a strange enthusiasm. "Convince the nation," he said, "that as men fearing God have fought them out of their bondage under the regal power, so men fearing God do now rule them in the fear of God. . . . Own your call, for it is of God: indeed, it is marvellous, and it hath been unprojected. . . . Never was a supreme power under such a way of owning God and being owned by Him." A spirit yet more enthusiastic at once appeared in the proceedings of the Convention. The resignation of their powers by Cromwell and the Council into its hands left it the one supreme authority; but by the instrument which convoked it provision had been made that this authority should be transferred in fifteen months to another assembly elected according to its directions. Its work was, in fact, to be that of a constituent assembly, paving the way for a Parliament on a really national basis; but the Convention put the largest construction on its commission, and boldly undertook the whole task of constitutional reform. Committees were appointed to consider the needs of the Church and the nation. The spirit of economy and honesty which pervaded the assembly appeared in its redress of the extravagance which prevailed in the civil service, and of the inequality of taxation. With a remarkable energy it undertook a host of reforms, for whose execution England has had to wait to our own day. The Long Parliament had shrunk from any reform of the Court of Chancery, where twenty-three thousand cases were waiting unheard. The Convention proposed its abolition. The work of compiling a single code of laws, begun under the Long Parliament by a committee with Sir Matthew Hale at its head, was again pushed forward. The frenzied alarm which these bold measures aroused among the lawyer class was soon backed by that of the clergy, who saw their wealth menaced by the establishment of civil marriage and by proposals to substitute the free contributions of congregations for the payment of tithes. The landed proprietors too rose against the scheme for the abolition of lay-patronage, which was favoured by the Convention, and predicted an age of confiscation. The "Barebones Parliament," as the assembly was styled in derision, was charged with a design to ruin property, the Church, and the law, with enmity to knowledge, and a blind and ignorant fanaticism. Cromwell himself shared the general uneasiness at its proceedings. His mind was that of an administrator, rather than that of a statesman, unspeculative, deficient in foresight, conservative, and eminently practical. He saw the need of administrative reform in Church and State; but he had no sympathy

July 1653.

Digitized by Google

whatever with the revolutionary theories which were filling the air around him. His desire was for "a settlement" which should be accompanied with as little disturbance of the old state of things as possible. If Monarchy had vanished in the turmoil of war, his experience of the Long Parliament only confirmed him in his belief of the need of establishing an executive power of a similar kind, apart from the power of the legislature, as a condition of civil liberty. His sword had won "liberty of conscience;" but passionately as he clung to it, he was still for an established Church, for a parochial system, and a ministry maintained by tithes. His social tendencies were simply those of the class to which he belonged. "I was by birth a gentleman," he told a later Parliament, and in the old social arrangement of "a nobleman, a gentleman, a yeoman," he saw "a good interest of the nation and a great one." He hated "that levelling principle" which tended to the reducing of all to one equality. "What was the purport of it," he asks with an amusing simplicity, "but to make the tenant as liberal in future as the landlord?"

**The New Constitution.**

To a practical temper such as this the speculative reforms of the Convention were as distasteful as to the lawyers and clergy whom they attacked. "Nothing," said Cromwell, "was in the hearts of these men but 'overturn, overturn.'" But he was delivered from his embarrassment by the internal dissensions of the Assembly itself. The day after the decision against tithes the more conservative members snatched a vote by surprise "that the sitting of this Parliament any longer, as now constituted, will not be for the good of the Commonwealth, and that it is requisite to deliver up unto the Lord-General the powers we received from him." The Speaker placed their abdication in Cromwell's hands, and the act was confirmed by the subsequent adhesion of a majority of the members. The dissolution of the Convention replaced matters in the state in which its assembly had found them; but there was still the same general anxiety to substitute some sort of legal rule for the power of the sword. The Convention had named during its session a fresh Council of State, and this body at once drew up, under the name of the Instrument of Government, a remarkable Constitution, which was adopted by the Council of Officers. They were driven by necessity to the step from which they had shrunk before, that of convening a Parliament on the reformed basis of representation. The House was to consist of four hundred members from England, thirty from Scotland, and thirty from Ireland. The seats hitherto assigned to small and rotten boroughs were transferred to larger constituencies, and for the most part to counties. All special rights of voting in the election of members was abolished, and replaced by a general right of suffrage, based on the possession of real or personal property to the value of two hundred pounds. Catholics and "Malignants," as those who had

*Dec.* 1653

Digitized by Google

SEC. X.

THE FALL OF PURITANISM. 1653-1660.

fought for the King were called, were alone excluded from the franchise. Constitutionally, all further organization of the form of government should have been left to this Assembly; but the dread of disorder during the interval of its election, as well as a longing for "settlement," drove the Council to complete their work by pressing the office of "Protector" upon Cromwell. "They told me that except I would undertake the government they thought things would hardly come to a composure or settlement, but blood and confusion would break in as before." If we follow, however, his own statement, it was when they urged that the acceptance of such a Protectorate actually limited his power as Lord-General, and "bound his hands to act nothing without the consent of a Council until the Parliament," that the post was accepted. The powers of the new Protector indeed were strictly limited. Though the members of the Council were originally named by him, each member was irremovable save by consent of the rest: their advice was necessary in all foreign affairs, their consent in matters of peace and war, their approval in nominations to the great offices of state, or the disposal of the military or civil power. With this body too lay the choice of all future Protectors. To the administrative check of the Council was added the political check of the Parliament. Three years at the most were to elapse between the assembling of one Parliament and another. Laws could not be made, nor taxes imposed but by its authority, and after the lapse of twenty days the statutes it passed became laws even if the Protector's assent was refused to them. The new Constitution was undoubtedly popular; and the promise of a real Parliament in a few months covered the want of any legal character in the new rule. The Government was generally accepted as a provisional one, which could only acquire legal authority from the ratification of its acts in the coming session; and the desire to settle it on such a Parliamentary basis was universal among the members of the new Assembly which met in the autumn at Westminster.

*Sept.* 1654.

**Parliament of 1654.**

Few Parliaments have ever been more memorable, or more truly representative of the English people, than the Parliament of 1654. It was the first Parliament in our history where members from Scotland and Ireland sate side by side with those from England, as they sit in the Parliament of to-day. The members for rotten boroughs and pocket-boroughs had disappeared. In spite of the exclusion of the Royalists from the polling-booths, and the arbitrary erasure of the names of a few ultra-republican members by the Council, the House had a better title to the name of a "free Parliament" than any which had sat before. The freedom with which the electors had exercised their right of voting was seen indeed in the large number of Presbyterian members who were returned, and in the reappearance of Haslerig and Bradshaw, with many members of

Digitized by Google

the Long Parliament, side by side with Lord Herbert and the older Sir Harry Vane. The first business of the House was clearly to consider the question of government; and Haslerig, with the fiercer republicans, at once denied the legal existence of either Council or Protector, on the ground that the Long Parliament had never been dissolved. Such an argument, however, told as much against the Parliament in which they sate as against the administration itself, and the bulk of the Assembly contented themselves with declining to recognize the Constitution or Protectorate as of more than provisional validity. They proceeded at once to settle the government on a Parliamentary basis. The "Instrument" was taken as the groundwork of the new Constitution, and carried clause by clause. That Cromwell should retain his rule as Protector was unanimously agreed; that he should possess the right of veto or a co-ordinate legislative power with the Parliament was hotly debated, though the violent language of Haslerig did little to disturb the general tone of moderation. Suddenly, however, Cromwell interposed. If he had undertaken the duties of Protector with reluctance, he looked on all legal defects in his title as more than supplied by the general acceptance of the nation. "I called not myself to this place," he urged, "God and the people of these kingdoms have borne testimony to it." His rule had been accepted by London, by the army, by the solemn decision of the judges, by addresses from every shire, by the very appearance of the members of the Parliament in answer to his writ. "Why may I not balance this Providence," he asked, "with any hereditary interest?" In this national approval he saw a call from God, a Divine Right of a higher order than that of the kings who had gone before. But there was another ground for the anxiety with which he watched the proceedings of the Commons. His passion for administration had far overstepped the bounds of a merely provisional rule in the interval before the assembling of the Parliament. His desire for "settlement" had been strengthened not only by the drift of public opinion, but by the urgent need of every day; and the power reserved by the "Instrument" to issue temporary Ordinances, "until further order in such matters, to be taken by the Parliament," gave a scope to his marvellous activity of which he at once took advantage. Sixty-four Ordinances had been issued in the nine months before the meeting of the Parliament. Peace had been concluded with Holland. The Church had been set in order. The law itself had been minutely regulated. The union with Scotland had been brought to completion. So far was Cromwell from dreaming that these measures, or the authority which enacted them, would be questioned, that he looked to Parliament simply to complete his work. "The great end of your meeting," he said at the first assembly of its members, "is healing and settling." Though he had himself done much,

Digitized by Google

he added, "there was still much to be done." Peace had to be made with Portugal, and alliance with Spain. Bills were laid before the House for the codification of the law. The plantation and settlement of Ireland had still to be completed. He resented the setting these projects aside for constitutional questions which, as he held, a Divine call had decided, but he resented yet more the renewed claim advanced by Parliament to the sole power of legislation. As we have seen, his experience of the evils which had arisen from the concentration of legislative and executive power in the Long Parliament had convinced Cromwell of the danger to public liberty which lay in such a union. He saw in the joint government of "a single person and a Parliament" the only assurance "that Parliaments should not make themselves perpetual," or that their power should not be perverted to public wrong. But whatever strength there may have been in the Protector's arguments, the act by which he proceeded to enforce them was fatal to liberty, and in the end to Puritanism. "If my calling be from God," he ended, "and my testimony from the People, God and the People shall take it from me, else I will not part from it." And he announced that no member would be suffered to enter the House without signing an engagement "not to alter the Government as it is settled in a single person and a Parliament." No act of the Stuarts had been a bolder defiance of constitutional law; and the act was as needless as it was illegal. One hundred members alone refused to take the engagement, and the signatures of three-fourths of the House proved that the security Cromwell desired might have been easily procured by a vote of Parliament. But those who remained resumed their constitutional task with unbroken firmness. They quietly asserted their sole title to government by referring the Protector's Ordinances to Committees for revision, and for conversion into laws. The "Instrument of Government" was turned into a bill, debated, and read a third time. Money votes, as in previous Parliaments, were deferred till "grievances" had been settled. But Cromwell once more intervened. The Royalists were astir again; and he attributed their renewed hopes to the hostile attitude which he attributed to the Parliament. The army, which remained unpaid while the supplies were delayed, was seething with discontent. "It looks," said the Protector, "as if the laying grounds for a quarrel had rather been designed than to give the people settlement. Judge yourselves whether the contesting of things that were provided for by this government hath been profitable expense of time for the good of this nation." In words of angry reproach he declared the Parliament dissolved.

*Jan.* 1655.

**The New Tyranny.**

With the dissolution of the Parliament of 1654 ended all show of legal rule. The Protectorate, deprived by its own act of all chance of legal sanction, became a simple tyranny. Cromwell professed,

Digitized by Google

indeed, to be restrained by the "Instrument:" but the one great restraint on his power which the Instrument provided, the inability to levy taxes save by consent of Parliament, was set aside on the plea of necessity. "The People," said the Protector in words which Strafford might have uttered, "will prefer their real security to forms." That a danger of Royalist revolt existed was undeniable, but the danger was at once doubled by the general discontent. From this moment, Whitelock tells us, "many sober and noble patriots," in despair of public liberty, "did begin to incline to the King's restoration." In the mass of the population the reaction was far more rapid. "Charles Stuart," writes a Cheshire correspondent to the Secretary of State, "hath five hundred friends in these adjacent counties for every one friend to you among them." But before the overpowering strength of the army even this general discontent was powerless. Yorkshire, where the Royalist insurrection was expected to be most formidable, never ventured to rise at all. There were risings in Devon, Dorset, and the Welsh Marches, but they were quickly put down, and their leaders brought to the scaffold. Easily however as the revolt was suppressed, the terror of the Government was seen in the energetic measures to which Cromwell resorted in the hope of securing order. The country was divided into ten military governments, each with a major-general at its head, who was empowered to disarm all Papists and Royalists, and to arrest suspected persons. Funds for the support of this military despotism were provided by an Ordinance of the Council of State, which enacted that all who had at any time borne arms for the King should pay every year a tenth part of their income, in spite of the Act of Oblivion, as a fine for their Royalist tendencies. The despotism of the major-generals was seconded by the older expedients of tyranny. The Episcopalian clergy had been zealous in promoting the insurrection, and they were forbidden in revenge to act as ministers or as tutors. The press was placed under a strict censorship. The payment of taxes levied by the sole authority of the Protector was enforced by distraint; and when a collector was sued in the courts for redress, the counsel for the prosecution were sent to the Tower.

**Scotland and Ireland.**

If pardon, indeed, could ever be won for a tyranny, the wisdom and grandeur with which he used the power he had usurped would win pardon for the Protector. The greatest among the many great enterprises undertaken by the Long Parliament had been the Union of the three Kingdoms: and that of Scotland with England had been brought about, at the very end of its career, by the tact and vigour of Sir Harry Vane. But its practical realization was left to Cromwell. In four months of hard fighting General Monk brought the Highlands to a new tranquillity; and the presence of an army of seven thousand men, backed by a line of forts, kept the most restless of the clans in good order. The settlement of the country

Digitized by Google

SEC. X.
THE FALL OF PURITANISM.
1653-1660.

was brought about by the temperance and sagacity of Monk's successor, General Deane. No further interference with the Presbyterian system was attempted beyond the suppression of the General Assembly. But religious liberty was resolutely protected, and Deane ventured even to interfere on behalf of the miserable victims whom Scotch bigotry was torturing and burning on the charge of witchcraft. Even steady Royalists acknowledged the justice of the Government and the wonderful discipline of its troops. "We always reckon those eight years of the usurpation," said Burnet afterwards, "a time of great peace and prosperity." Sterner work had to be done before Ireland could be brought into real union with its sister kingdoms. The work of conquest had been continued by Ireton, and completed after his death by General Ludlow, as mercilessly as it had begun. Thousands perished by famine or the sword. Shipload after shipload of those who surrendered were sent over sea for sale into forced labour in Jamaica and the West Indies. More than forty thousand of the beaten Catholics were permitted to enlist for foreign service, and found a refuge in exile under the banners of France and Spain. The work of settlement, which was undertaken by Henry Cromwell, the younger and abler of the Protector's sons, turned out to be even more terrible than the work of the sword. It took as its model the Colonization of Ulster, the fatal measure which had destroyed all hope of a united Ireland and had brought inevitably in its train the massacre and the war. The people were divided into classes in the order of their assumed guilt. All who after fair trial were proved to have personally taken part in the massacre were sentenced to banishment or death. The general amnesty which freed "those of the meaner sort" from all question on other scores was far from extending to the landowners. Catholics proprietors who had shown no goodwill to the Parliament, even though they had taken no part in the war, were punished by the forfeiture of a third of their estates. All who had borne arms were held to have forfeited the whole, and driven into Connaught, where fresh estates were carved out for them from the lands of the native clans. No such doom had ever fallen on a nation in modern times as fell upon Ireland in its new settlement. Among the bitter memories which part Ireland from England the memory of the bloodshed and confiscation which the Puritans wrought remains the bitterest; and the worst curse an Irish peasant can hurl at his enemy is "the curse of Cromwell." But pitiless as the Protector's policy was, it was successful in the ends at which it aimed. The whole native population lay helpless and crushed. Peace and order were restored, and a large incoming of Protestant settlers from England and Scotland brought a new prosperity to the wasted country. Above all, the legislative union which had been

Digitized by Google

brought about with Scotland was now carried out with Ireland, and thirty seats were allotted to its representatives in the general Parliament.

**England and the Protectorate.**

In England Cromwell dealt with the Royalists as irreconcilable enemies; but in every other respect he carried fairly out his pledge of "healing and settling." The series of administrative reforms planned by the Convention had been partially carried into effect before the meeting of Parliament in 1654; but the work was pushed on after the dissolution of the House with yet greater energy. Nearly a hundred Ordinances showed the industry of the Government. Police, public amusements, roads, finances, the condition of prisons, the imprisonment of debtors, were a few among the subjects which claimed Cromwell's attention. An Ordinance of more than fifty clauses reformed the Court of Chancery. The anarchy which had reigned in the Church since the break down of Episcopacy and the failure of the Presbyterian system to supply its place, was put an end to by a series of wise and temperate measures for its reorganization. Rights of patronage were left untouched; but a Board of Triers, a fourth of whom were laymen, was appointed to examine the fitness of ministers presented to livings; and a Church board of gentry and clergy was set up in every county to exercise a supervision over ecclesiastical affairs, and to detect and remove scandalous and ineffectual ministers. Even by the confession of Cromwell's opponents, the plan worked well. It furnished the country with "able, serious preachers," Baxter tells us, "who lived a godly life, of what tolerable opinion soever they were," and, as both Presbyterian and Independent ministers were presented to livings at the will of their patrons, it solved so far as practical working was concerned the problem of a religious union among Protestants on the base of a wide variety of Christian opinion. From the Church which was thus reorganized all power of interference with faiths differing from its own was resolutely withheld. Cromwell remained true throughout to his great cause of religious liberty. Even the Quaker, rejected by all other Christian bodies as an anarchist and blasphemer, found sympathy and protection in Cromwell. The Jews had been excluded from England since the reign of Edward the First; and a prayer which they now presented for leave to return was refused by the commission of merchants and divines to whom the Protector referred it for consideration. But the refusal was quietly passed over, and the connivance of Cromwell in the settlement of a few Hebrews in London and Oxford was so clearly understood that no one ventured to interfere with them.

**Cromwell and Europe.**

No part of his policy is more characteristic of Cromwell's mind, whether in its strength or in its weakness, than his management of foreign affairs. While England had been absorbed in her long and obstinate struggle for freedom the whole face of the world around her had changed. The Thirty Years' War was over. The victories of Gustavus,

Digitized by Google

SEC. X.

THE FALL OF PURITANISM. 1653-1660.

and of the Swedish generals who followed him, had been seconded by the policy of Richelieu and the intervention of France. Protestantism in Germany was no longer in peril from the bigotry or ambition of the House of Austria; and the Treaty of Westphalia had drawn a permanent line between the territories belonging to the adherents of the old religion and the new. There was little danger, indeed, now to Europe from the great Catholic House which had threatened its freedom ever since Charles the Fifth. Its Austrian branch was called away from dreams of aggression in the west to a desperate struggle with the Turk for the possession of Hungary and the security of Austria itself. Spain, from causes which it is no part of our present story to detail, was falling into a state of strange decrepitude. So far from aiming to be mistress of Europe, she was rapidly sinking into the almost helpless prey of France. It was France which had become the dominant power in Christendom, though her position was far from being as commanding as it was to become under Lewis the Fourteenth. The peace and order which prevailed after the cessation of the religious troubles throughout her compact and fertile territory gave scope at last to the quick and industrious temper of the French people; while her wealth and energy was placed by the centralizing administration of Henry the Fourth, of Richelieu, and of Mazarin, almost absolutely in the hands of the Crown. Under the three great rulers who have just been named her ambition was steadily directed to the same purpose of territorial aggrandizement, and though limited as yet to the annexation of the Spanish and Imperial territories, which still parted her frontier from the Pyrenees, the Alps, and the Rhine, a statesman of wise political genius would have discerned the beginning of that great struggle for supremacy over Europe at large which was only foiled by the genius of Marlborough and the victories of the Grand Alliance. But in his view of European politics Cromwell was misled by the conservative and unspeculative temper of his mind as well as by the strength of his religious enthusiasm. Of the change in the world around him he seems to have discerned nothing. He brought to the Europe of Mazarin simply the hopes and ideas with which all England was thrilling in his youth at the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War. Spain was still to him "the head of the Papal Interest," whether at home or abroad. "The Papists in England," he said to the Parliament of 1656, "have been accounted, ever since I was born, Spaniolized; they never regarded France, or any other Papist state, but Spain only." The old English hatred of Spain, the old English resentment at the shameful part which the nation had been forced to play in the great German struggle by the policy of James and of Charles, lived on in Cromwell, and was only strengthened by the religious enthusiasm which the success of Puritanism had kindled within him. "The Lord Himself," he wrote to his admirals as they sailed to the

Digitized by Google

West Indies, "hath a controversy with your enemies; even with that Romish Babylon of which the Spaniard is the great underpropper. In that respect we fight the Lord's battles." What Sweden had been under Gustavus, England, Cromwell dreamt, might be now—the head of a great Protestant League in the struggle against Catholic aggression. "You have on your shoulders," he said to the Parliament of 1654, "the interest of all the Christian people of the world. I wish it may be written on our hearts to be zealous for that interest." The first step in such a struggle would necessarily be to league the Protestant powers together, and Cromwell's earliest efforts were directed to bring the ruinous and indecisive quarrel with Holland to an end. The fierceness of the strife had grown with each engagement; but the hopes of Holland fell with her admiral, Tromp, who received a mortal wound at the moment when he had succeeded in forcing the English line; and the skill and energy of his successor, De Ruyter, struggled in vain to restore her waning fortunes. She was saved by the expulsion of the Long Parliament, which 1653. had persisted in its demand of a political union of the two countries; and the new policy of Cromwell was seen in the conclusion of peace on a simple pledge from the Dutch to compensate English merchants for their losses in the war. The peace with Holland 1654. was followed by the conclusion of like treaties with Sweden and with Denmark; and on the arrival of a Swedish envoy with offers of a league of friendship, Cromwell endeavoured to bring the Dutch, the Brandeburgers, and the Danes into the same confederation of the Protestant powers. His efforts in this direction, though they never wholly ceased, were foiled for the moment; but Cromwell was resolute to kindle again the religious strife which had been closed by the treaty of Westphalia, and he seized on a quarrel between the Duke of Savoy and his Protestant subjects in the valleys of Piedmont as a means of kindling it. A ruthless massacre of these Vaudois by the Duke's troops had roused deep resentment throughout England, a resentment which still breathes in the noblest of Milton's sonnets. While the poet called on God to avenge his "slaughtered saints whose bones lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold," Cromwell was already busy with the work of earthly vengeance. An English envoy appeared at the Duke's court with haughty demands of redress. Their refusal would have been followed by instant war, for the Protestant Cantons of Switzerland were bribed into promising a force of ten thousand men for an attack on Savoy; and how far Cromwell expected the flame to spread was seen in his attitude towards Spain. He had already demanded freedom of trade and worship for English merchants in Spanish America; and a fleet with three thousand men on board was now secretly dispatched against San Domingo.

As though to announce the outbreak of a world-wide struggle, Blake

Digitized by Google

SEC. X.

THE FALL OF PURITANISM. 1653-1660.

appeared in the Mediterranean, bombarded Algiers, and destroyed the fleet with which its pirates had ventured through the reign of Charles to insult the English coast. The thunder of his guns, every Puritan believed, would be heard in the castle of St. Angelo, and Rome itself would have to bow to the greatness of Cromwell. But the vast schemes of the Protector everywhere broke down. The cool Italian who ruled France, Cardinal Mazarin, foiled his projects in Piedmont by forcing the Duke of Savoy to grant the English demands. Blake, who had sailed to the Spanish coast, failed to intercept the treasure fleet from America, and the West Indian expedition was foiled in its descent on San Domingo. Its conquest of Jamaica, important as it really was in breaking through the monopoly of the New World in the South which Spain had till now enjoyed, seemed at the time but a poor result for the vast expenditure of money and blood. The war which the attack on San Domingo necessarily brought on saw the last and grandest of the triumphs of England's first great admiral. Blake found the Plata fleet guarded by galleons in the strongly armed harbour
1657. of Santa Cruz. He forced an entrance into the harbour, sunk or burnt every ship in it, and worked his fleet out again in the teeth of a gale. His death, as the fleet touched at Plymouth on its return, alone damped the joy at this great victory. But Cromwell desired triumphs on land as on sea; and his desire threw him blindfold into the hands of Mazarin, who was engaged on his part in the war with Spain which was brought afterwards to a close in the Treaty of the Pyrenees. Cromwell's demand of Dunkirk, which had long stood in the way of any acceptance of his offers of aid, was at last conceded; and a detachment of the Puritan army joined the French troops who were
1658. attacking Flanders under the command of Turenne. Their valour and discipline was shown by the part they took in the victory of the Dunes, a victory which forced the Flemish towns to open their gates to the French, and gave Dunkirk to Cromwell.

**The Parliament of 1657.**

Never had the fame of England stood higher; and yet never had any English ruler committed so fatal a blunder as that of Cromwell in aiding the ambition of France. But the errors of his foreign policy were small in comparison with the errors of his policy at home. The government of the Protector had become a simple tyranny, but it was impossible for him to remain content with the position of a tyrant. He was as anxious as ever to give a legal basis to his administration; and he seized on the war as a pretext for again summoning a Parliament. But he no longer trusted, as in the Parliament of 1654, to perfect freedom of election. The sixty members sent from Ireland and Scotland were simply nominees of the Government. Its whole influence was exerted to secure the return of the more conspicuous members of the Council. All Catholics, and all Royalists who had actually fought for the King, were still disqualified from voting. It was

Digitized by Google

calculated that of the members returned one-half were bound to the Government by ties of profit or place. But Cromwell was still unsatisfied. A certificate of the Council was required from each member before admission to the House; and a fourth of the whole number returned—one hundred in all, with Haslerig at their head—were by this means excluded on grounds of disaffection or want of religion. To these arbitrary acts of violence the House replied only by a course of singular moderation and wisdom. From the first it disclaimed any purpose of opposing the Government. One of its earliest acts provided securities for Cromwell's person, which was threatened by constant plots of assassination. It supported him in his war policy, and voted supplies of unprecedented extent for the maintenance of the struggle. It was this attitude of loyalty which gave force to its steady refusal to sanction the system of tyranny which had practically placed England under martial law. In his opening address Cromwell boldly took his stand in support of the military despotism wielded by the major-generals. "It hath been more effectual towards the discountenancing of vice and settling religion than anything done these fifty years. I will abide by it," he said, with singular vehemence, "notwithstanding the envy and slander of foolish men. I could as soon venture my life with it as with anything I ever undertook. If it were to be done again, I would do it." But no sooner had a bill been introduced into Parliament to confirm the proceedings of the major-generals than a long debate showed the temper of the Commons. They had resolved to acquiesce in the Protectorate, but they were equally resolved to bring it again to a legal mode of government. This indeed was the aim of even Cromwell's wiser adherents. "What makes me fear the passing of this Act," one of them wrote to his son Henry, "is that thereby His Highness' government will be more founded in force, and more removed from that natural foundation which the people in Parliament are desirous to give him, supposing that he will become more theirs than now he is." The bill was rejected, and Cromwell bowed to the feeling of the nation by withdrawing the powers of the major-generals. But the defeat of the tyranny of the sword was only a step towards a far bolder effort for the restoration of the power of the law. It was no mere pedantry, still less was it vulgar flattery, which influenced the Parliament in their offer to Cromwell of the title of King. The experience of the last few years had taught the nation the value of the traditional forms under which its liberties had grown up. A king was limited by constitutional precedents. "The king's prerogative," it was well urged, "is under the courts of justice, and is bounded as well as any acre of land, or anything a man hath." A Protector, on the other hand, was new in our history, and there were no traditional means of limiting his power. "The one office being lawful in its nature," said



Digitized by Google

SEC. X.
THE FALL OF PURITANISM.
1653-1660.

Glynne, "known to the nation, certain in itself, and confined and regulated by the law, and the other not so—that was the great ground why the Parliament did so much insist on this office and title." Under the name of Monarchy, indeed, the question really at issue between the party headed by the officers and the party led by the lawyers in the Commons was that of the restoration of constitutional and legal rule. The proposal was carried by an overwhelming majority,

1657.

but a month passed in endless consultations between the Parliament and the Protector. His good sense, his knowledge of the general feeling of the nation, his real desire to obtain a settlement which should secure the ends for which Puritanism had fought, political and religious liberty, broke, in conference after conference, through a mist of words. But his real concern throughout was with the temper of the army. To Cromwell his soldiers were no common swordsmen. They were "godly men, men that will not be beaten down by a worldly and carnal spirit while they keep their integrity;" men in whose general voice he recognized the voice of God. "They are honest and faithful men," he urged, "true to the great things of the Government. And though it really is no part of their goodness to be unwilling to submit to what a Parliament shall settle over them, yet it is my duty and conscience to beg of you that there may be no hard things put upon them which they cannot swallow. I cannot think God would bless an undertaking of anything which would justly and with cause grieve them." The temper of the army was soon shown. Its leaders, with Lambert, Fleetwood, and Desborough at their head, placed their commands in Cromwell's hands. A petition from the officers to Parliament demanded the withdrawal of the proposal to restore the Monarchy, "in the name of the old cause for which they had bled." Cromwell at once anticipated the coming debate on this petition, a debate which might have led to an open breach between the army and the Commons, by a refusal of the Crown. "I cannot undertake this Government," he said, "with that title of King; and that is my answer to this great and weighty business."

Disappointed as it was, the Parliament with singular self-restraint turned to other modes of bringing about its purpose. The offer of the Crown had been coupled with the condition of accepting a Constitution, which was a modification of the Instrument of Government adopted by the Parliament of 1654, and this Constitution Cromwell emphatically approved. "The things provided by this Act of Government," he owned, "do secure the liberties of the people of God as they never before have had them." With a change of the title of King into that of Protector, the Act of Government now became law: and the solemn inauguration of the Protector by the Parliament was a practical acknowledgment on the part of Cromwell of the illegality of his former rule. In the name of the Commons the Speaker invested him

Digitized by Google

with a mantle of State, placed the sceptre in his hand, and girt the sword of justice by his side. By the new Act of Government Cromwell was allowed to name his own successor, but in all after cases the office was to be an elective one. In every other respect the forms of the older Constitution were carefully restored. Parliament was again to consist of two Houses, the seventy members of "the other House" being named by the Protector. The Commons regained their old right of exclusively deciding on the qualification of their members. Parliamentary restrictions were imposed on the choice of members of the Council, and officers of State or of the army. A fixed revenue was voted to the Protector, and it was provided that no moneys should be raised but by assent of Parliament. Liberty of worship was secured for all but Papists, Prelatists, Socinians, or those who denied the inspiration of the Scriptures; and liberty of conscience was secured for all.

**Death of Cromwell.**

The excluded members were again admitted when the Parliament reassembled after an adjournment of six months; and the hasty act of Cromwell in giving his nominees in "the other House" the title of Lords kindled a quarrel which was busily fanned by Haslerig. But while the Houses were busy with their squabble the hand of death was falling on the Protector. He had long been weary of his task. "God knows," he burst out a little time before to the Parliament, "I would have been glad to have lived under my woodside, and to have kept a flock of sheep, rather than to have undertaken this government." And now to the weariness of power was added the weakness and feverish impatience of disease. Vigorous and energetic as his life had seemed, his health was by no means as strong as his will; he had been struck down by intermittent fever in the midst of his triumphs both in Scotland and in Ireland, and during the past year he had suffered from repeated attacks of it. "I have some infirmities upon me," he owned twice over in his speech at the opening of the Parliament; and his feverish irritability was quickened by the public danger. No supplies had been voted, and the pay of the army was heavily in arrear, while its temper grew more and more sullen at the appearance of the new Constitution and the reawakening of the Royalist intrigues. The continuance of the Parliamentary strife threw Cromwell at last, says an observer at his court, "into a rage and passion like unto madness." Summoning his coach, by a sudden impulse, the Protector drove with a few guards to Westminster; and, setting aside the remonstrances of Fleetwood, summoned the two Houses to his presence. "I do dissolve this Parliament," he ended a speech of angry rebuke, "and let God be judge between you and me." Fatal as was the error, for the moment all went well. The army was reconciled by the blow levelled at its opponents, and the few murmurers were weeded from its ranks by a careful remodelling. The triumphant officers vowed to stand or fall

*Feb. 1658*



Digitized by Google

SEC. X.
THE FALL OF PURITANISM.
1653-1660.

with his Highness. The danger of a Royalist rising vanished before a host of addresses from the counties. Great news too came from abroad, where victory in Flanders, and the cession of Dunkirk, set the seal on Cromwell's glory. But the fever crept steadily on, and his looks told the tale of death to the Quaker, Fox, who met him riding in Hampton Court Park. "Before I came to him," he says, "as he rode at the head of his Life Guards, I saw and felt a waft of death go forth against him, and when I came to him he looked like a dead man." In the midst of his triumph Cromwell's heart was in fact heavy with the sense of failure. He had no desire to play the tyrant; nor had he any belief in the permanence of a mere tyranny. He had hardly dissolved the Parliament before he was planning the summons of another, and angry at the opposition which his Council offered to the project. "I will take my own resolutions," he said gloomily to his household; "I can no longer satisfy myself to sit still, and make myself guilty of the loss of all the honest party and of the nation itself." But before his plans could be realized the overtaxed strength of the Protector suddenly gave way. He saw too clearly the chaos into which his death would plunge England to be willing to die. "Do not think I shall die," he burst out with feverish energy to the physicians who gathered round him; "say not I have lost my reason! I tell you the truth. I know it from better authority than any you can have from Galen or Hippocrates. It is the answer of God himself to our prayers!" Prayer indeed rose from every side for his recovery, but death drew steadily nearer, till even Cromwell felt that his hour was come. "I would be willing to live," the dying man murmured, "to be further serviceable to God and his people, but my work is done! Yet God will be with his people!" A storm which tore roofs from houses, and levelled huge trees in every forest, seemed a fitting prelude to the passing away of his mighty spirit. Three days later, on the third of September, the day which had witnessed his victories of Worcester and Dunbar, Cromwell quietly breathed his last.

**The Fall of Puritanism.**

So absolute even in death was his sway over the minds of men, that, to the wonder of the excited Royalists, even a doubtful nomination on his death-bed was enough to secure the peaceful succession of his son, Richard Cromwell. Many, in fact, who had rejected the authority of his father submitted peaceably to the new Protector. Their motives were explained by Baxter, the most eminent among the Presbyterian ministers, in the address to Richard which announced his adhesion. "I observe," he says, "that the nation generally rejoice in your peaceable entrance upon the Government. Many are persuaded that you have been strangely kept from participating in any of our late bloody contentions, that God might make you the healer of our breaches, and employ you in that Temple work which David himself might not be honoured with, though it was in his mind, because he shed blood abundantly and

Digitized by Google

made great wars." The new Protector was a weak and worthless man, but the bulk of the nation were content to be ruled by one who was at any rate no soldier, no Puritan, and no innovator. Richard was known to be lax and godless in his conduct, and he was believed to be conservative and even Royalist in heart. The tide of reaction was felt even in his Council. Their first act was to throw aside one of the greatest of Cromwell's reforms, and to fall back in the summons which they issued for the new Parliament on the old system of election. It was felt far more keenly in the tone of the new House of Commons. The republicans under Vane, backed adroitly by the Royalists, fell hotly on Cromwell's system. The fiercest attack of all came from Sir Ashley Cooper, a Dorsetshire gentleman who had changed sides in the civil war, had fought for the King and then for the Parliament, had been a member of Cromwell's Council, and had of late ceased to be a member of it. His virulent invective on "his Highness of deplorable memory, who with fraud and force deprived you of your liberty when living and entailed slavery on you at his death," was followed by an equally virulent invective against the army. "They have not only subdued their enemies," said Cooper, "but the masters who raised and maintained them! They have not only conquered Scotland and Ireland, but rebellious England too; and there suppressed a Malignant party of magistrates and laws." The army was quick with its reply. The Council of its officers demanded the appointment of a soldier as their General in the place of the new Protector, who had assumed the command. The Commons at once ordered the dismissal of all officers who refused to engage "not to disturb or interrupt the free meetings of Parliament;" and Richard ordered the Council of Officers to dissolve. Their reply was a demand for the dissolution of the Parliament, a demand with which Richard was forced to comply. The great work of the army 1659.
however was still to secure a settled government, and setting aside the new Protector, whose weakness was now evident, they resolved to fall back on the Parliament they had expelled from St. Stephen's, but which remained the one body that could put forward a legitimate claim to power. Of the one hundred and sixty members who had continued to sit after the King's death, about ninety returned to their seats, and resumed the administration of affairs. But the memory of the Expulsion made any trust in or reconciliation with the army impossible. In spite of Vane's counsels a reform of the officers was at once proposed, and though a Royalist rising in Cheshire under Sir George Booth threw the disputants for a moment together, the struggle revived as the danger passed away. A new hope indeed filled men's minds. Not only was the nation sick of military rule, but the army, unconquerable so long as it held together, at last showed signs of division; and Haslerig was encouraged by the temper of the troops in Scotland and Ireland to demand the dismissal of Fleet-

Digitized by Google

SEC. X.

THE FALL OF PURITANISM. 1653-1660.

wood and Lambert from their commands. They answered by driving the Parliament again from Westminster, and by marching to meet the army under Monk which was threatening to advance from Scotland to the South. Negotiation gave Monk time to gather a Convention at Edinburgh, and to strengthen himself with money and recruits. Then he advanced rapidly to Coldstream, and the cry of "a free Parliament" ran like fire through the country. Not only Fairfax, who appeared in arms in Yorkshire, but the ships on the Thames, and the mob which thronged the streets of London caught up the cry; the army, thrown into confusion by its own divisions, strove to check the tide of feeling by recalling the Commons; and Monk, who lavished protestations of loyalty to that assembly, while he accepted petitions for a "Free Parliament," entered London unopposed. From the moment of his entry the restoration of the Stuarts became inevitable. The army, resolute as it still remained for the maintenance of "the Cause," was deceived by Monk's declarations of loyalty to it, and rendered powerless by an adroit dispersion of the troops over the country. At the instigation of Ashley Cooper those who remained of the members who had been excluded from the House of Commons by Pride's Purge again forced their way into Parliament, and at once resolved on a dissolution and the election of a new House of Commons. The new House, which bears the name of the Convention, had hardly taken the solemn League and Covenant which showed its Presbyterian temper, and its leaders had only begun to draw up terms on which a Royal restoration might be assented to, when they found that Monk had betrayed them, and was already in negotiation with the exiled Court. All exaction of terms was now impossible; the Declaration of Breda, in which Charles promised a general pardon, religious toleration, and satisfaction to the army, was received with a burst of national enthusiasm; and the old Constitution was restored by a solemn vote of the Convention, "that according to the ancient and fundamental laws of this Kingdom, the government is, and ought to be, by King, Lords, and Commons." The vote was hardly passed when Charles landed at Dover, and made his way amidst the shouts of a great multitude to Whitehall. "It is my own fault," laughed the new King, with characteristic irony, "that I had not come back sooner; for I find nobody who does not tell me he has always longed for my return."

1660.

*May* 1660.

**Milton.**

Puritanism, so men believed, had fallen never to rise again. As a political experiment it had ended in utter failure and disgust. As a religious system of national life it brought about the wildest outbreak of moral revolt that England has ever witnessed. And yet Puritanism was far from being dead; it drew indeed a nobler life from its very fall. Nothing aids us better to trace the real course of Puritan influence since the fall of Puritanism than the thought of the two great works which have handed down from one generation to another its highest

Digitized by Google

and noblest spirit. From that time to this the most popular of all religious books has been the Puritan allegory of the "Pilgrim's Progress." The most popular of all English poems has been the Puritan epic of the "Paradise Lost." Milton had been engaged during the civil war in strife with Presbyterians and with Royalists, pleading for civil and religious freedom, for freedom of social life, and freedom of the press. At a later time he became Latin Secretary to the Protector, in spite of a blindness which had been brought on by the intensity of his study. The Restoration found him of all living men the most hateful to the Royalists; for it was his "Defence of the English People" which had justified throughout Europe the execution of the King. Parliament ordered his book to be burnt by the common hangman; he was for a time imprisoned, and even when released he had to live amidst threats of assassination from fanatical Cavaliers. To the ruin of his cause were added personal misfortunes in the bankruptcy of the scrivener who held the bulk of his property, and in the Fire of London, which deprived him of much of what was left. As age drew on, he found himself reduced to comparative poverty, and driven to sell his library for subsistence. Even among the sectaries who shared his political opinions Milton stood in religious opinion alone, for he had gradually severed himself from every accepted form of faith, had embraced Arianism, and had ceased to attend at any place of worship. Nor was his home a happy one. The grace and geniality of his youth disappeared in the drudgery of a schoolmaster's life and amongst the invectives of controversy. In age his temper became stern and exacting. His daughters, who were forced to read to their blind father in languages which they could not understand, revolted utterly against their bondage. But solitude and misfortune only brought out into bolder relief Milton's inner greatness. There was a grand simplicity in the life of his later years. He listened every morning to a chapter of the Hebrew Bible, and after musing in silence for a while pursued his studies till mid-day. Then he took exercise for an hour, played for another hour on the organ or viol, and renewed his studies. The evening was spent in converse with visitors and friends. For lonely and unpopular as Milton was, there was one thing about him which made his house in Bunhill Fields a place of pilgrimage to the wits of the Restoration. He was the last of the Elizabethans. He had possibly seen Shakspere, as on his visits to London after his retirement to Stratford the playwright passed along Bread Street to his wit combats at the Mermaid. He had been the contemporary of Webster and Massinger, of Herrick and Crashaw. His "Comus" and "Arcades" had rivalled the masques of Ben Jonson. It was with a reverence drawn from thoughts like these that Dryden looked on the blind poet as he sate, clad in black, in his chamber hung with rusty green tapestry, his fair brown hair falling as of old over a calm, serene face that still retained much of its youthful beauty, his cheeks

Digitized by Google

SEC. X.

THE FALL OF PURITANISM. 1653-1660.

delicately coloured, his clear grey eyes showing no trace of their blindness. But famous, whether for good or ill, as his prose writings had made him, during fifteen years only a few sonnets had broken his silence as a singer. It was now, in his blindness and old age, with the cause he loved trodden under foot by men as vile as the rabble in "Comus," that the genius of Milton took refuge in the great poem on which through years of silence his imagination had still been brooding.

**The Paradise Lost.**

On his return from his travels in Italy, Milton spoke of himself as musing on "a work not to be raised from the heat of youth or the vapours of wine, like that which flows at waste from the pen of some vulgar amourist or the trencher fury of a rhyming parasite, nor to be obtained by the invocation of Dame Memory and her Siren daughters; but by devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his Seraphim, with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom He pleases." His lips were touched at last. Seven years after the 1667. Restoration appeared the "Paradise Lost," and four years later the "Paradise Regained" and "Samson Agonistes, in the severe grandeur 1671. of whose verse we see the poet himself "fallen," like Samson, "on evil days and evil tongues, with darkness and with danger compassed round." But great as the two last works were, their greatness was eclipsed by that of their predecessor. The whole genius of Milton expressed itself in the "Paradise Lost." The romance, the gorgeous fancy, the daring imagination which he shared with the Elizabethan poets, the large but ordered beauty of form which he had drunk in from the literature of Greece and Rome, the sublimity of conception, the loftiness of phrase which he owed to the Bible, blended in this story "of man's first disobedience, and the fruit of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste brought death into the world and all our woe." It is only when we review the strangely mingled elements which make up the poem, that we realize the genius which fused them into such a perfect whole. The meagre outline of the Hebrew legend is lost in the splendour and music of Milton's verse. The stern idealism of Geneva is clothed in the gorgeous robes of the Renascence. If we miss something of the free play of Spenser's fancy, and yet more of the imaginative delight in their own creations which gives so exquisite a life to the poetry of the early dramatists, we find in place of these the noblest example which our literature affords of the ordered majesty of classic form. But it is not with the literary value of the "Paradise Lost" that we are here concerned. Its historic importance lies in this, that it is the Epic of Puritanism. Its scheme is the problem with which the Puritan wrestled in hours of gloom and darkness, the problem of sin and redemption, of the world-wide struggle of evil against good. The intense moral concentration of the Puritan had given an almost bodily shape to spiritual

Digitized by Google

abstractions before Milton gave life and being to the forms of Sin and Death. It was the Puritan tendency to mass into one vast "body of sin" the various forms of human evil, and by the very force of a passionate hatred to exaggerate their magnitude and their power, to which we owe the conception of Milton's Satan. The greatness of the Puritan aim in the long and wavering struggle for justice and law and a higher good; the grandeur of character which the contest developed; the colossal forms of good and evil which moved over its stage; the debates and conspiracies and battles which had been men's life for twenty years; the mighty eloquence and mightier ambition which the war had roused into being—all left their mark on the "Paradise Lost." Whatever was highest and best in the Puritan temper spoke in the nobleness and elevation of the poem, in its purity of tone, in its grandeur of conception, in its ordered and equable realization of a great purpose. Even in his boldest flights, Milton is calm and master of himself. His touch is always sure. Whether he passes from Heaven to Hell, or from the council hall of Satan to the sweet conference of Adam and Eve, his tread is steady and unfaltering. But if the poem expresses the higher qualities of the Puritan temper, it expresses no less exactly its defects. Throughout it we feel almost painfully a want of the finer and subtler sympathies, of a large and genial humanity, of a sense of spiritual mystery. Dealing as Milton does with subjects the most awful and mysterious that poet ever chose, he is never troubled by the obstinate questionings of invisible things which haunted the imagination of Shakspere. We look in vain for any Æschylean background of the vast unknown. "Man's disobedience" and the scheme for man's redemption are laid down as clearly and with just as little mystery as in a Puritan discourse. On topics such as these, even God the Father (to borrow Pope's sneer) "turns a school divine." As in his earlier poems he had ordered and arranged nature, so in the "Paradise Lost" Milton orders and arranges Heaven and Hell. His mightiest figures, Angel or Archangel, Satan or Belial, stand out colossal but distinct. There is just as little of the wide sympathy with all that is human which is so loveable in Chaucer and Shakspere. On the contrary the Puritan individuality is nowhere so overpowering as in Milton. He leaves the stamp of himself deeply graven on all he creates. We hear his voice in every line of his poem. The cold, severe conception of moral virtue which reigns throughout it, the intellectual way in which he paints and regards beauty (for the beauty of Eve is a beauty which no mortal man may love) are Milton's own. We feel his inmost temper in the stoical self-repression which gives its dignity to his figures. Adam utters no cry of agony when he is driven from Paradise. Satan suffers in a defiant silence. It is to this intense self-concentration that we must attribute the strange deficiency of humour which Milton

Digitized by Google

shared with the Puritans generally, and which here and there breaks the sublimity of his poem with strange slips into the grotesque. But it is above all to this Puritan deficiency in human sympathy that we must attribute his wonderful want of dramatic genius. Of the power which creates a thousand different characters, which endows each with its appropriate act and word, which loses itself in its own creations, no great poet ever had less.

**Disbanding of the Army.**

The poem of Milton was the epic of a fallen cause. The broken hope, which had seen the Kingdom of the Saints pass like a dream away, spoke in its very name. Paradise was lost once more, when the New Model, which embodied the courage and the hope of Puritanism, laid down its arms. In his progress to the capital Charles passed in review the soldiers assembled on Blackheath. Betrayed by their general, abandoned by their leaders, surrounded as they were by a nation in arms, the gloomy silence of their ranks awed even the careless King with a sense of danger. But none of the victories of the New Model were so glorious as the victory which it won over itself. Quietly, and without a struggle, as men who bowed to the inscrutable will of God, the farmers and traders who had dashed Rupert's chivalry to pieces on Naseby field, who had scattered at Worcester the "army of the aliens," and driven into helpless flight the sovereign that now came "to enjoy his own again," who had renewed beyond sea the glories of Cressy and Agincourt, had mastered the Parliament, had brought a King to justice and the block, had given laws to England, and held even Cromwell in awe, became farmers and traders again, and were known among their fellow-men by no other sign than their greater soberness and industry. And, with them, Puritanism laid down the sword. It ceased from the long attempt to build up a kingdom of God by force and violence, and fell back on its truer work of building up a kingdom of righteousness in the hearts and consciences of men. It was from the moment of its seeming fall that its real victory began. As soon as the wild orgy of the Restoration was over, men began to see that nothing that was really worthy in the work of Puritanism had been undone. The revels of Whitehall, the scepticism and debauchery of courtiers, the corruption of statesmen, left the mass of Englishmen what Puritanism had made them, serious, earnest, sober in life and conduct, firm in their love of Protestantism and of freedom. In the Revolution of 1688 Puritanism did the work of civil liberty which it had failed to do in that of 1642. It wrought out through Wesley and the revival of the eighteenth century the work of religious reform which its earlier efforts had only thrown back for a hundred years. Slowly but steadily it introduced its own seriousness and purity into English society, English literature, English politics. The whole history of English progress since the Restoration, on its moral and spiritual sides, has been the history of Puritanism.

Digitized by Google

# CHAPTER IX.

## THE REVOLUTION.

### Section I.—England and the Revolution.

[*Authorities.*—For the social change see the Memoirs of Pepys and Evelyn, the dramatic works of Wycherley and Etherege, and Lord Macaulay's "Essay on the Dramatists of the Restoration." The fullest account of Lord Bacon will be found in his "Life and Letters," now being published with his "Works," by Mr. Spedding, whose apologetic tones may be contrasted with the verdict of Lord Macaulay ("Essay on Lord Bacon") and with the more judicious judgment of Mr. Gardner ("History of England," and "The Spanish Marriage"). The fairest estimate of his position in the history of Science will be found in Mr. Lewes's "History of Philosophy." For the earlier history of English Science see Hallam's sketch ("Literary History," vol. iv.); the histories of the Royal Society by Thompson or Wade; and Sir D. Brewster's biography of Newton. Sir W. Molesworth has edited the works of Hobbes.]

**Modern England.**

No event ever marked a deeper or a more lasting change in the temper of the English people than the entry of Charles the Second into Whitehall. With it modern England begins. Influences which had up to this time moulded our history, the theological influence of the Reformation, the monarchical influence of the new kingship, the feudal influence of the Middle Ages, the yet earlier influence of tradition and custom, suddenly lost power over the minds of men. We find ourselves all at once among the great currents of thought and activity which have gone on widening and deepening from that time to this. The England around us is our own England, an England whose chief forces are industry and science, the love of popular freedom and of law, an England which presses steadily forward to a larger social justice and equality, and which tends more and more to bring every custom and tradition, religious, intellectual, and political, to the test of pure reason. Between modern thought, on some at least of its more important sides, and the thought of men before the Restoration there is a great gulf fixed. A political thinker in the present day would find it equally hard to discuss any point of statesmanship with Lord Burleigh or with Oliver Cromwell. He would find no point of contact between their ideas of national life or national welfare, their conception of government or the ends of government, their mode of regarding economical and social questions, and his own. But no gulf

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
ENGLAND AND THE REVOLUTION.

of this sort parts us from the men who followed the Restoration. From that time to this, whatever differences there may have been as to practical conclusions drawn from them, there has been a substantial agreement as to the grounds of our political, our social, our intellectual and religious life. Paley would have found no difficulty in understanding Tillotson: Newton and Sir Humphry Davy could have talked without a sense of severance. There would have been nothing to hinder a perfectly clear discussion on government or law between John Locke and Jeremy Bentham.

**The Puritan Ideal.**

The change from the old England to the new is so startling that we are apt to look on it as a more sudden change than it really was, and the outer aspect of the Restoration does much to strengthen this impression of suddenness. The aim of the Puritan had been to set up a visible Kingdom of God upon earth. He had wrought out his aim by reversing the policy of the Stuarts and the Tudors. From the time of Henry the Eighth to the time of Charles the First, the Church had been looked upon primarily as an instrument for securing, by moral and religious influences, the social and political ends of the State. Under the Commonwealth, the State, in its turn, was regarded primarily as an instrument for securing through its political and social influences the moral and religious ends of the Church. In the Puritan theory, Englishmen were "the Lord's people;" a people dedicated to Him by a solemn Covenant, and whose end as a nation was to carry out His will. For such an end it was needful that rulers, as well as people, should be "godly men." Godliness became necessarily the chief qualification for public employment. The new modelling of the army filled its ranks with "saints." Parliament resolved to employ no man "but such as the House shall be satisfied of his real godliness." The Covenant which bound the nation to God bound it to enforce God's laws even more earnestly than its own. The Bible lay on the table of the House of Commons; and its prohibition of swearing, of drunkenness, of fornication became part of the law of the land. Adultery was made felony without the benefit of clergy. Pictures whose subjects jarred with the new decorum were ordered to be burnt, and statues were chipped ruthlessly into decency. It was in the same temper that Puritanism turned from public life to private. The Covenant bound not the whole nation only, but every individual member of the nation, to "a jealous God," a God jealous of any superstition that robbed him of the worship which was exclusively his due, jealous of the distraction and frivolity which robbed him of the entire devotion of man to His service. The want of poetry, of fancy, in the common Puritan temper condemned half the popular observances of England as superstitions. It was superstitious to keep Christmas, or to deck the house with holly and ivy. It was superstitious to dance round the village maypole. It was flat Popery to eat

Digitized by Google

a mince-pie. The rough sport, the mirth and fun of "merry England," were out of place in an England called with so great a calling. Bull-baiting, bear-baiting, horse-racing, cock-fighting, the village revel, the dance on the village green, were put down with the same indiscriminating severity. The long struggle between the Puritans and the playwrights ended in the closing of every theatre.

**The Revolt of the Restoration.**

The Restoration brought Charles to Whitehall: and in an instant the whole face of England was changed. All that was noblest and best in Puritanism was whirled away with its pettiness and its tyranny in the current of the nation's hate. Religion had been turned into a polical and a social tyranny, and it fell with their fall. Godliness became a by-word of scorn; sobriety in dress, in speech, in manners was flouted as a mark of the detested Puritanism. Butler, in his "Hudibras," poured insult on the past with a pedantic buffoonery for which the general hatred, far more than its humour, secured a hearing. Archbishop Sheldon listened to the mock sermon of a Cavalier who held up the Puritan phrase and the Puritan twang to ridicule in his hall at Lambeth. Duelling and raking became the marks of a fine gentleman; and grave divines winked at the follies of "honest fellows," who fought, gambled, swore, drank, and ended a day of debauchery by a night in the gutter. The life of a man of fashion vibrated between frivolity and excess. One of the comedies of the time tells the courtier that "he must dress well, dance well, fence well, have a talent for love letters, an agreeable voice, be amorous and discreet—but not too constant." But to graces such as these the rakes of the Restoration added a shamelessness and a brutality which passes belief. Lord Rochester was a fashionable poet, and the titles of some of his poems are such as no pen of our day could copy. Sir Charles Sedley was a fashionable wit, and the foulness of his words made even the porters of Covent Garden pelt him from the balcony when he ventured to address them. The truest type of the time is the Duke of Buckingham, and the most characteristic event in the Duke's life was a duel in which he consummated his seduction of Lady Shrewsbury by killing her husband, while the Countess in disguise as a page held his horse for him and looked on at the murder. Vicious as the stage was, it only reflected the general vice of the time. The Comedy of the Restoration borrowed everything from the Comedy of France save the poetry, the delicacy, and good taste which veiled its grossness. Seduction, intrigue, brutality, cynicism, debauchery, found fitting expression in dialogue of a studied and deliberate foulness, which even its wit fails to redeem from disgust. Wycherley, the first dramatist of the time, remains the most brutal among all writers for the stage; and nothing gives so damning an impression of his day as the fact that he found actors to repeat his words and audiences to applaud them. In men such as Wycherley Milton found types for the Belial of his great poem, "than whom a spirit more lewd fell not from

Digitized by Google

Heaven, or more gross to love vice for itself." He piques himself on the frankness and "plain dealing" which painted the world as he saw it, a world of brawls and assignations, of orgies at Vauxhall, and fights with the watch, of lies and double-entendres, of knaves and dupes, of men who sold their daughters, and women who cheated their husbands. But the cynicism of Wycherley was no greater than that of the men about him; and in mere love of what was vile, in contempt of virtue and disbelief in purity or honesty, the King himself stood ahead of any of his subjects.

**The Earlier Change.**

It is easy however to exaggerate the extent of this reaction. So far as we can judge from the memoirs of the time, its more violent forms were practically confined to the capital and the Court. The mass of Englishmen were satisfied with getting back their maypoles and mince-pies; and a large part of the people remained Puritan in life and belief, though they threw aside many of the outer characteristics of Puritanism. Nor was the revolution in feeling as sudden as it seemed. Even if the political strength of Puritanism had remained unbroken, its social influence must soon have ceased. The young Englishmen who grew up in the midst of civil war knew nothing of the bitter tyranny which gave its zeal and fire to the religion of their fathers. From the social and religious anarchy around them, from the endless controversies and discussions of the time, they drank in the spirit of scepticism, of doubt, of free inquiry. If religious enthusiasm had broken the spell of ecclesiastical tradition, its own extravagance broke the spell of religious enthusiasm; and the new generation turned in disgust to try forms of political government and spiritual belief by the cooler and less fallible test of reason. It is easy to see the rapid spread of such a tendency even in the families of the leading Puritans. Neither of Cromwell's sons made any pretensions to religion. Cromwell himself in his later years felt bitterly that Puritanism had missed its aim. He saw the country gentleman, alienated from it by the despotism it had brought in its train, alienated perhaps even more by the appearance of a religious freedom for which he was unprepared, drifting into a love of the older Church that he had once opposed. He saw the growth of a dogged resistance in the people at large. The attempt to secure spiritual results by material force had failed, as it always fails. It broke down before the indifference and resentment of the great mass of the people, of men who were neither lawless nor enthusiasts, but who clung to the older traditions of social order, and whose humour and good sense revolted alike from the artificial conception of human life which Puritanism had formed and from its effort to force such a conception on a people by law. It broke down, too, before the corruption of the Puritans themselves. It was impossible to distinguish between the saint and the hypocrite as soon as godliness became profitable. Ashley Cooper, a sceptic in religion and a pro-

Digitized by Google

fligate in morals, was among "the loudest bagpipes of the squeaking train." Even amongst the really earnest Puritans prosperity disclosed a pride, a worldliness, a selfish hardness which had been hidden in the hour of persecution. The tone of Cromwell's later speeches shows his consciousness that the ground was slipping from under his feet. He no longer dwells on the dream of a Puritan England, of a nation rising as a whole into a People of God. He falls back on the phrases of his youth, and the saints become again a "peculiar people," a remnant, a fragment among the nation at large. But the influences which were really foiling Cromwell's aim, and forming beneath his eyes the new England from which he turned in despair, were influences whose power he can hardly have recognized. Even before the outburst of the Civil War a small group of theological Latitudinarians had gathered round Lord Falkland at Great Tew. In the very year when the King's standard was set up at Nottingham, Hobbes published the first of his works on Government. The last Royalist had only just laid down his arms when the little company who were at a later time to be known as the Royal Society gathered round Wilkins at Oxford. It is in this group of scientific observers that we catch the secret of the coming generation. From the spiritual problems with which it had so long wrestled in vain, England turned at last to the physical world around it, to the observation of its phenomena, to the discovery of the laws which govern them. The pursuit of Physical Science became a passion; and its method of research, by observation, comparison, and experiment, transformed the older methods of inquiry in matters without its pale. In religion, in politics, in the study of man and of nature, not faith but reason, not tradition but inquiry, were to be the watchwords of the coming time. The dead-weight of the past was suddenly rolled away, and the new England heard at last and understood the call of Francis Bacon.

**Lord Bacon.**

If in our notice of the Elizabethan literature we omitted all mention of Lord Bacon, it is because the scientific influence of Bacon told not on the age of Elizabeth but on the age of the Restoration. "For my name and memory," he said at the close of his life, "I leave it to men's charitable speeches, and to foreign nations, and the next age." It was to the "next age" too that, in spite of the general sense of his wisdom and ability, the scientific method of Bacon really made its first appeal. What belonged to his own time was the poorest and meanest part of him. Francis Bacon was born at the opening of Elizabeth's reign, three years before the birth of Shakspere. He was the younger son of a Lord Keeper, as well as the nephew of Lord Burleigh, and even in boyhood his quickness and sagacity won the favour of the Queen. Elizabeth "delighted much to confer with him, and to prove him with questions: unto which he delivered himself with that gravity and maturity above his years that her Majesty would

1561.

Digitized by Google

SEC. I. ENGLAND AND THE REVOLUTION.

often term him 'the young Lord Keeper.'" His earlier hopes of Court success, however, were soon dashed to the ground. He was left poor by his father's death; the ill-will of the Cecils barred his advancement with the Queen: and a few years before Shakspere's arrival in London he entered at Gray's Inn, and soon became one of the most successful lawyers of the time. At twenty-three he was a member of the House of Commons, and his judgment and eloquence at once brought him to the front. "The fear of every man that heard him was lest he should make an end," Ben Jonson tells us. The steady growth of his reputation was quickened by the appearance of his "Essays," a work 1597. remarkable, not merely for the condensation of its thought and its felicity and exactness of expression, but for the power with which it applied to human life that experimental analysis which Bacon was at a later time to make the key of Science. His fame at once became great at home and abroad, but with this nobler fame Bacon could not content himself. He was conscious of great powers, as well as great aims for the public good; and it was a time when such aims could hardly be realized save through the means of the Crown. But political employment seemed farther off than ever. At the outset of his career in Parliament he had irritated Elizabeth by a free opposition to her demand of a subsidy; and though the offence was atoned for by profuse apologies, and by the cessation of all further resistance to the policy of the Court, the law offices of the Crown were more than once refused to him, and it was only after the publication of his "Essays" that he could obtain some slight promotion as a Queen's Counsel. The moral weakness which at once disclosed itself is perhaps the best justification of the Queen in her reluctance—a reluctance so strangely in contrast with her ordinary course—to bring the wisest head in her realm to her Council-board. The men whom Elizabeth employed were for the most part men whose intellect was directed by a strong sense of public duty. Their reverence for the Queen, strangely exaggerated as it may seem to us, was guided and controlled by an ardent patriotism and an earnest sense of religion; and with all their regard for the Royal prerogative, they never lost their regard for the law. The grandeur and originality of Bacon's intellect parted him from men like these quite as much as the bluntness of his moral perceptions. In politics, as in science, he had little reverence for the past. Law, constitutional privileges, or religion, were to him simply means of bringing about certain ends of good government; and if these ends could be brought about in shorter fashion he saw only pedantry in insisting on more cumbrous means. He had great social and political ideas to realize, the reform and codification of the law, the civilization of Ireland, the purification of the Church, the union—at a later time—of Scotland and England, educational projects, projects of material improvement, and the like; and the direct and

Digitized by Google

shortest way of realizing these ends was in Bacon's eyes the use of the power of the Crown. But whatever charm such a conception of the Royal power might have for her successor, it seems to have had little charm for Elizabeth; nor was her nature likely to be won by the servility with which Bacon strove to improve his new opportunity of advancement. Partly, perhaps, from rivalry with the Cecils, but certainly in great part from his appreciation of Bacon's power, Lord Essex had steadily backed his efforts after promotion; and his disappointment in them had been alleviated by the Earl's generous present of an estate worth (in our money) some twelve thousand pounds. Bacon showed a true friendship for Essex by dissuading him from the career of opposition which at last brought him to the block; but every tie of friendship and gratitude was forgotten when he appeared as Queen's Counsel to support the charge of treason at the Earl's trial. He aggravated and pressed home the charge with his whole energy and skill; and accepted a large gift from the court for his later service in publishing a garbled account of the "practices and treasons" of his friend. But Elizabeth still remained cold to his advances; and it was not till the accession of James that the rays of Royal favour broke slowly upon him. He became successively Solicitor and Attorney-General; the year of Shakspere's death saw him called to the Privy Council; he verified Elizabeth's prediction by becoming Lord Keeper. At last the goal of his ambition was reached. He had attached himself to 1618.
the rising fortunes of Buckingham, and the favour of Buckingham made him Lord Chancellor. He was raised to the peerage as Baron Verulam, and created, at a later time, Viscount St. Albans. But the nobler dreams for which these meaner honours had been sought escaped his grasp. His projects still remained projects, while Bacon to retain his hold on office was stooping to a miserable compliance with the worst excesses of Buckingham and his Royal master. The years during which he held the Chancellorship were the most disgraceful years of a disgraceful reign. They saw the execution of Raleigh, the sacrifice of the Palatinate, the exaction of benevolences, the multiplication of monoplies, the supremacy of Buckingham. Against none of the acts of folly and wickedness which distinguished James's government did Bacon do more than protest; in some of the worst, and above all in the attempt to coerce the judges into prostrating law at the King's feet, he took a personal part. But even his remonstrances were too much for the young favourite, who regarded him as the mere creature of his will. It was in vain that Bacon flung himself at the Duke's feet, and begged him to pardon a single instance of opposition to his caprice. A Parliament was impending, and Buckingham resolved to avert from himself the storm which was gathering by sacrificing to it his meaner dependants. To ordinary eyes the Chancellor was at the summit of human success. Jonson had just sung of him as one



Digitized by Google

SEC. I. ENGLAND AND THE REVOLUTION.

"whose even thread the Fates spin round and full out of their choicest and their whitest wool," when the storm burst. The great Parliament of 1620 met after a silence of six disgraceful years, and one of its first acts was to charge Bacon with corruption in the exercise of his office. He at once pleaded guilty to the charge. "I do plainly and ingenuously confess that I am guilty of corruption, and do renounce all defence." "I beseech your Lordships," he added, "to be merciful to a broken reed." The heavy fine imposed on him was remitted by the Crown; but the Great Seal was taken from him, and he was declared incapable of holding office in the State or of sitting in Parliament.

**The Novum Organum.**

Bacon's fall restored him to that position of real greatness from which his ambition had so long torn him away. "My conceit of his person," said Ben Jonson, "was never increased towards him by his place or honours. But I have and do reverence him for his greatness that was only proper to himself, in that he seemed to me ever by his work one of the greatest men, and most worthy of admiration, that had been in many ages. In his adversity I ever prayed that God would give him strength: for greatness he could not want." His intellectual activity was never more conspicuous than in the last four years of his life. He began a digest of the laws, and a "History of England under the Tudors," revised and expanded his "Essays," dictated a jest book, and busied himself with experiments in physics. It was while studying the effect of cold in preventing animal putrefaction that he stopped his coach to stuff a fowl with snow and caught the fever which ended in his death. The great work of his life remained a fragment to the last. Even as a boy at College he had expressed his dislike of the Aristotelean philosophy, as "a philosophy only strong for disputations and contentions, but barren of the production of works for the benefit of the life of man." As a law-student of twenty-one he sketched in a tract on the "Greatest Birth of Time" the system of inductive inquiry he was already prepared to substitute for it. At forty-four, after the final disappointment of his political hopes from Elizabeth, the publication of the "Advancement of Learning" marked the first decisive appearance of the new philosophy. The close of this work was, in his own words, "a general and faithful perambulation of learning, with an inquiry what parts thereof lie fresh and waste, and not improved and converted by the industry of man; to the end that such a plot, made and recorded to memory, may both minister light to any public designation and also serve to excite voluntary endeavours." It was only by such a survey, he held, that men could be turned from useless studies, or ineffectual means of pursuing more useful ones, and directed to the true end of knowledge as "a rich storehouse for the glory of the Creator and the relief of man's estate." Two years later appeared his "Cogitata et Visa," a first sketch of the "Novum Organum," which in its complete form was presented to James immediately before Bacon's fall

1626.

1605.

Digitized by Google

The year after his fall he produced his "Natural and Experimental History." This, with the "Novum Organum" and the "Advancement of Learning," was all of his projected "Instauratio Magna" which he was destined to complete—and even of this portion we have only part of the last two divisions. The "Ladder of the Understanding," which was to have followed these and led up from experience to science, the "Anticipations," or provisional hypotheses for the inquiries of the new philosophy, and the closing account of "Science in Practice" were left for posterity to bring to completion. "We may, as we trust," said Bacon, "make no despicable beginnings. The destinies of the human race must complete it, in such a manner perhaps as men looking only at the present world would not readily conceive. For upon this will depend, not only a speculative good, but all the fortunes of mankind, and all their power." When we turn from words like these to the actual work which Bacon did, it is hard not to feel a certain disappointment. He did not thoroughly understand the older philosophy which he attacked. His revolt from the waste of human intelligence which he conceived to be owing to the adoption of a false method of investigation blinded him to the real value of deduction as an instrument of discovery; and he was encouraged in his contempt for it as much by his own ignorance of mathematics as by the non-existence in his day of the great deductive sciences of physics and astronomy. Nor had he a more accurate prevision of the method of modern science. The inductive process to which he exclusively directed men's attention bore no fruit in Bacon's hands. The "art of investigating nature" on which he prided himself has proved useless for scientific purposes, and would be rejected by modern investigators. Where he was on a more correct track he can hardly be regarded as original. "It may be doubted," says Dugald Stewart, "whether any one important rule with regard to the true method of investigation be contained in his works of which no hint can be traced in those of his predecessors." Not only indeed did Bacon fail to anticipate the methods of modern science, but he even rejected the great scientific discoveries of his own day. He set aside with the same scorn the astronomical theory of Copernicus and the magnetic investigations of Gilbert, and the contempt seems to have been fully returned. "The Lord Chancellor wrote on science," said Harvey, the discoverer of the circulation of the blood, "like a Lord Chancellor."

In spite however of his inadequate appreciation either of the old philosophy or the new, the almost unanimous voice of later ages has attributed, and justly attributed, to the "Novum Organum" a decisive influence on the developement of modern science. If he failed in revealing the method of experimental research, Bacon was the first to proclaim the existence of a Philosophy of Science, to insist on the unity of knowledge and inquiry throughout the physical world, to give dignity by the large and noble temper in which he treated them to the



Digitized by Google

petty details of experiment in which science had to begin, to clear a way for it by setting scornfully aside the traditions of the past, to claim for it its true rank and value, and to point to the enormous results which its culture would bring in increasing the power and happiness of mankind. In one respect his attitude was in the highest degree significant. The age in which he lived was one in which theology was absorbing the intellectual energy of the world. He was the servant, too, of a king with whom theological studies superseded all others. But if he bowed in all else to James, Bacon would not, like Casaubon, bow in this. He would not even, like Descartes, attempt to transform theology by turning reason into a mode of theological demonstration. He stood absolutely aloof from it. Though as a politician he did not shrink from dealing with such subjects as Church Reform, he dealt with them simply as matters of civil polity. But from his exhaustive enumeration of the branches of human knowledge he excluded theology, and theology alone. His method was of itself inapplicable to a subject, where the premisses were assumed to be certain, and the results known. His aim was to seek for unknown results by simple experiment. It was against received authority and accepted tradition in matters of inquiry that his whole system protested; what he urged was the need of making belief rest strictly on proof, and proof rest on the conclusions drawn from evidence by reason. But in theology—all theologians asserted—reason played but a subordinate part. "If I proceed to treat of it," said Bacon, "I shall step out of the bark of human reason, and enter into the ship of the Church. Neither will the stars of philosophy, which have hitherto so nobly shone on us, any longer give us their light." The certainty indeed of conclusions on such subjects was out of harmony with the grandest feature of Bacon's work, his noble confession of the liability of every inquirer to error. It was his especial task to warn men against the "vain shows" of knowledge which had so long hindered any real advance in it, the "idols" of the Tribe, the Den, the Forum, and the Theatre, the errors which spring from the systematizing spirit which pervades all masses of men, or from individual idiosyncracies, or from the strange power of words and phrases over the mind, or from the traditions of the past. Nor were the claims of theology easily to be reconciled with the position which he was resolute to assign to natural science. "Through all those ages," Bacon says, "wherein men of genius or learning principally or even moderately flourished, the smallest part of human industry has been spent on natural philosophy, though this ought to be esteemed as the great mother of the sciences: for all the rest, if torn from this root, may perhaps be polished and formed for use, but can receive little increase." It was by the adoption of the method of inductive inquiry which physical science was to make its own, and by basing inquiry on the ground which physical

Digitized by Google

science could supply, that the moral sciences, ethics and politics, could alone make any real advance. "Let none expect any great promotion of the sciences, especially in their effective part, unless natural philosophy be drawn out to particular sciences; and, again, unless these particular sciences be brought back again to natural philosophy. From this defect it is that astronomy, optics, music, many mechanical arts, and (what seems stranger) even moral and civil philosophy and logic rise but little above the foundations, and only skim over the varieties and surfaces of things."

**Beginnings of English Science.**

It was this lofty conception of the position and destiny of natural science which Bacon was the first to impress upon mankind at large. The age was one in which knowledge, as we have seen, was passing to fields of inquiry which had till then been unknown, in which Kepler and Galileo were creating modern astronomy, in which Descartes was revealing the laws of motion, and Harvey the circulation of the blood. But to the mass of men this great change was all but imperceptible; and it was the energy, the profound conviction, the eloquence of Bacon which first called the attention of mankind as a whole to the power and importance of physical research. It was he who by his lofty faith in the results and victories of the new philosophy nerved its followers to a zeal and confidence equal to his own. It was he who above all gave dignity to the slow and patient processes of investigation, of experiment, of comparison, to the sacrificing of hypothesis to fact, to the single aim after truth, which was to be the law of modern science. But, in England at least, Bacon stood—as we have said—before his age. The beginnings of physical science were more slow and timid there than in any country of Europe. Only two discoveries of any real value came from English research before the Restoration; the first, Gilbert's discovery of terrestrial magnetism in the close of Elizabeth's reign; the next, the great discovery of the circulation of the blood, which was taught by Harvey in the reign of James. But apart from these illustrious names England took little share in the scientific movement of the continent; and her whole energies seemed to be whirled into the vortex of theology and politics by the Civil War. But the war had not reached its end when a little group of students were to be seen in London, men "inquisitive," says one of them, "into natural philosophy and other parts of human learning, and particularly of what hath been called the New Philosophy. . . . which from the times of Galileo at Florence, and Sir Francis Bacon (Lord Verulam) in England, hath been much cultivated in Italy, France, Germany, and other parts abroad, as well as with us in England." The strife of the time indeed aided in directing the minds of men to natural inquiries. "To have been always tossing about some theological question," says the first historian of the Royal Society, Bishop Sprat, "would have been to have made that their private diversion, the excess of which they disliked in

1645.

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
ENGLAND AND THE REVOLUTION.
1648.

the public. To have been eternally musing on civil business and the distresses of the country was too melancholy a reflection. It was nature alone which could pleasantly entertain them in that estate." Foremost in the group stood Doctors Wallis and Wilkins, whose removal to Oxford, which had just been reorganized by the Puritan Visitors, divided the little company into two societies. The Oxford society, which was the more important of the two, held its meetings at the lodgings of Dr. Wilkins, who had become Warden of Wadham College, and added to the names of its members that of the eminent mathematician Dr. Ward, and that of the first of English economists, Sir William Petty. "Our business," Wallis tells us, "was (precluding matters of theology and State affairs) to discourse and consider of philosophical inquiries and such as related thereunto, as Physick, Anatomy, Geometry, Astronomy, Navigation, Statics, Magnetics, Chymicks, Mechanicks, and Natural Experiments: with the state of these studies, as then cultivated at home and abroad. We then discoursed of the circulation of the blood, the valves in the *venæ lacteæ*, the lymphatic vessels, the Copernican hypothesis, the nature of comets and new stars, the satellites of Jupiter, the oval shape of Saturn, the spots in the sun and its turning on its own axis, the inequalities and selenography of the moon, the several phases of Venus and Mercury, the improvement of telescopes, the grinding of glasses for that purpose, the weight of air, the possibility or impossibility of vacuities, and nature's abhorrence thereof, the Torricellian experiment in quicksilver, the descent of heavy bodies and the degree of acceleration therein, and divers other things of like nature."

**The Royal Society**

1662.

The other little company of inquirers, who remained in London, was at last broken up by the troubles of the Second Protectorate; but it was revived at the Restoration by the return to London of the more eminent members of the Oxford group. Science suddenly became the fashion of the day. Charles was himself a fair chemist, and took a keen interest in the problems of navigation. The Duke of Buckingham varied his freaks of rhyming, drinking, and fiddling, by fits of devotion to his laboratory. Poets like Denham and Cowley, courtiers like Sir Robert Murray and Sir Kenelm Digby, joined the scientific company to which in token of his sympathy with it the King gave the title of "The Royal Society." The curious glass toys called Prince Rupert's drops recall the scientific inquiries which amused the old age of the great cavalry-leader of the Civil War. Wits and fops crowded to the meetings of the new Society. Statesmen like Lord Somers felt honoured at being chosen its presidents. Its definite establishment marks the opening of a great age of scientific discovery in England. Almost every year of the half-century which followed saw some step made to a wider and truer knowledge. Our first national observatory rose at Greenwich, and modern astronomy began with the long series

Digitized by Google

of astronomical observations which immortalized the name of Flamsteed. His successor, Halley, undertook the investigation of the tides, of comets, and of terrestrial magnetism. Hooke improved the microscope, and gave a fresh impulse to microscopical research. Boyle made the air-pump a means of advancing the science of pneumatics, and became the founder of experimental chemistry. Wilkins pointed forward to the science of philology in his scheme of a universal language. Sydenham introduced a careful observation of nature and facts which changed the whole face of medicine. The physiological researches of Willis first threw light upon the structure of the brain. Woodward was the founder of mineralogy. In his edition of Willoughby's "Ornithology," and in his own "History of Fishes," John Ray was the first to raise zoology to the rank of a science; and the first scientific classification of animals was attempted in his "Synopsis of Quadrupeds." Modern botany began with his "History of Plants," and the researches of an Oxford professor, Robert Morrison; while Grow divided with Malpighi the credit of founding the study of vegetable physiology. But great as some of these names undoubtedly are, they are lost in the lustre of Isaac Newton. Newton was born at Woolsthorpe in 1642. Lincolnshire, on Christmas-day, in the memorable year which saw the outbreak of the Civil War. In the year of the Restoration he entered Cambridge, where the teaching of Isaac Barrow quickened his genius for mathematics, and where the method of Descartes had superseded the older modes of study. From the close of his Cambridge career his life became a series of great physical discoveries. At twenty-three he facilitated the calculation of planetary movements by his theory of Fluxions. The optical discoveries to which he was led by his experi- 1665. ments with the prism, and which he partly disclosed in the lectures which he delivered as Mathematical Professor at Cambridge, were embodied in the theory of light which he laid before the Royal Society 1671. on becoming a Fellow of it. His discovery of the law of gravitation had been made as early as 1666; but the erroneous estimate which was then generally received of the earth's diameter prevented him from disclosing it for sixteen years; and it was not till the eve of the Revolution that the "Principia" revealed to the world his new theory 1687. of the Universe.

**The Latitudinarians.**

It is impossible to do more than indicate, in such a summary as we have given, the wonderful activity of directly scientific thought which distinguished the age of the Restoration. But the sceptical and experimental temper of mind which this activity disclosed told on every phase of the world around it. We see the attempt to bring religious speculation into harmony with the conclusions of reason and experience in the school of Latitudinarian theologians who sprang from the group of thinkers which gathered on the eve of the Civil War round Lord Falkland at Great Tew. Whatever

Digitized by Google

verdict history may pronounce on Falkland's political career, his name must ever remain memorable in the history of religious thought. A new era in English religion began with the speculations of the men he gathered round him. Their work was above all to deny the authority of tradition in matters of faith, as Bacon had denied it in matters of physical research; and to assert in the one field as in the other the supremacy of reason as a test of truth. Of the authority of the Church, its Fathers, and its Councils, John Hales, a Canon of Windsor, and a friend of Laud, said briefly "it is none." He dismissed with contempt the accepted test of universality. "Universality is such a proof of truth as truth itself is ashamed of. The most singular and strongest part of human authority is properly in the wisest and the most virtuous, and these, I trow, are not the most universal." William Chillingworth, a man of larger if not keener mind, had been taught by an early conversion to Catholicism, and by a speedy return, the insecurity of any basis for belief but that of private judgment. In his "Religion of Protestants" he set aside ecclesiastical tradition or Church authority as grounds of faith in favour of the Bible, but only of the Bible as interpreted by the common reason of men. Jeremy Taylor, the most brilliant of English preachers, a sufferer like Chillingworth on the Royalist side during the troubles, and who was rewarded at the Restoration with the bishopric of Down, limited even the authority of the Scriptures themselves. Reason was the one means which Taylor approved of in interpreting the Bible; but the certainty of the conclusions which reason drew from the Bible varied, as he held, with the conditions of reason itself. In all but the simplest truths of natural religion "we are not sure not to be deceived." The deduction of points of belief from the words of the Scriptures was attended with all the uncertainty and liability to error which sprang from the infinite variety of human understandings, the difficulties which hinder the discovery of truth, and the influences which divert the mind from accepting or rightly estimating it. It was plain to a mind like Chillingworth's that this denial of authority, this perception of the imperfection of reason in the discovery of absolute truth, struck as directly at the root of Protestant dogmatism, as at the root of Catholic infallibility. "If Protestants are faulty in this matter [of claiming authority] it is for doing it too much and not too little. This presumptuous imposing of the senses of man upon the words of God, of the special senses of man upon the general words of God, and laying them upon men's consciences together under the equal penalty of death and damnation, this vain conceit that we can speak of the things of God better than in the words of God, this deifying our own interpretations and tyrannous enforcing them upon others, this restraining of the word of God from that latitude and generality, and the understandings of men from that liberty wherein Christ and His apostles

Digitized by Google

left them, is and hath been the only foundation of all the schisms of the Church, and that which makes them immortal." In his "Liberty of Prophecying" Jeremy Taylor pleaded the cause of toleration with a weight of argument which hardly required the triumph of the Independents and the shock of Naseby to drive it home. But the freedom of conscience which the Independent founded on the personal communion of each soul with God, the Latitudinarian founded on the weakness of authority and the imperfection of human reason. Taylor pleads even for the Anabaptist and the Romanist. He only gives place to the action of the civil magistrate in "those religions whose principles destroy government," and "those religions—if there be any such—which teach ill life." Hales openly professed that he would quit the Church to-morrow if it required him to believe that all that dissented from it must be damned. Chillingworth denounced persecution in words of fire. "Take away this persecution, burning, cursing, damning of men for not subscribing the words of men as the words of God; require of Christians only to believe Christ and to call no man master but Him; let them leave claiming infallibility that have no title to it, and let them that in their own words disclaim it, disclaim it also in their actions. . . . . Protestants are inexcusable if they do offer violence to other men's consciences." From the denunciation of intolerance the Latitudinarians passed easily to the dream of comprehension which had haunted every nobler soul since the "Utopia" of More. Hales based his loyalty to the Church of England on the fact that it was the largest and the most tolerant Church in Christendom. Chillingworth pointed out how many obstacles to comprehension were removed by such a simplification of belief as flowed from a rational theology. Like More, he asked for "such an ordering of the public service of God as that all who believe the Scripture and live according to it might without scruple or hypocrisy or protestation in any part join in it." Taylor, like Chillingworth, rested his hope of union on the simplification of belief. He saw a probability of error in all the creeds and confessions adopted by Christian Churches. "Such bodies of confessions and articles," he said, "must do much hurt." "He is rather the schismatic who makes unnecessary and inconvenient impositions, than he who disobeys them because he cannot do otherwise without violating his conscience." The Apostles' Creed in its literal meaning seemed to him the one term of Christian union which the Church had any right to impose.

With the Restoration the Latitudinarians came at once to the front. They were soon distinguished from both Puritans and High Churchmen by their opposition to dogma, by their preference of reason to tradition whether of the Bible or the Church, by their basing religion on a natural theology, by their aiming at rightness of life rather than at correctness of opinion, by their advocacy of toleration and compre-

Digitized by Google

hension as the grounds of Christian unity. Chillingworth and Taylor found successors in the restless good sense of Burnet, the enlightened piety of Tillotson, and the calm philosophy of Bishop Butler. Meanwhile the impulse which such men were giving to religious speculation was being given to political and social inquiry by a mind of far greater keenness and power.

**Hobbes.**

Bacon's favourite secretary was Thomas Hobbes. "He was beloved by his Lordship," Aubrey tells us, "who was wont to have him walk in his delicate groves, where he did meditate; and when a notion darted into his mind, Mr. Hobbes was presently to write it down. And his Lordship was wont to say that he did it better than anyone else about him; for that many times when he read their notes he scarce understood what they writ, because they understood it not clearly themselves." The long life of Hobbes covers a memorable space in our history. He was born in the year of the victory over the Armada; he died, at the age of ninety-two, only nine years before the Revolution. His ability soon made itself felt, and in his earlier days he was the secretary of Bacon, and the friend of Ben Jonson and Lord Herbert of Cherbury. But it was not till the age of fifty-four, when he withdrew to France on the eve of the Great Rebellion, that his speculations were made known to the world in his treatise "De Cive." He joined the exiled Court at Paris, and became mathematical tutor to Charles the Second, whose love and regard for him seems to have been real to the end. But his post was soon forfeited by the appearance of his "Leviathan;" he was forbidden to approach the Court, and returned to England, where he seems to have acquiesced in the rule of Cromwell. The Restoration brought him a pension; but his two great works were condemned by Parliament, and "Hobbism" became, ere he died, the popular synonym for irreligion and immorality. Prejudice of this kind sounded oddly in the case of a writer who had laid down, as the two things necessary to salvation, Faith in Christ and obedience to the law. But the prejudice sprang from a true sense of the effect which the Hobbist philosophy must necessarily have on the current religion and the current notions of political and social morality. Hobbes was the first great English writer who dealt with the science of government from the ground, not of tradition, but of reason. It was in his treatment of man in the stage of human developement which he supposed to precede that of society that he came most roughly into conflict with the accepted beliefs. Men, in his theory, were by nature equal, and their only natural relation was a state of war. It was no innate virtue of man himself which created human society out of this chaos of warring strengths. Hobbes in fact denied the existence of the more spiritual sides of man's nature. His hard and narrow logic dissected every human custom and desire, and reduced even the most sacred to demon-

1588–1679.

1642.

1651.

Digitized by Google

strations of a prudent selfishness. Friendship was simply a sense of social utility to one another. The so-called laws of nature, such as gratitude or the love of our neighbour, were in fact contrary to the natural passions of man, and powerless to restrain them. Nor had religion rescued man by the interposition of a Divine will. Nothing better illustrates the daring with which the new scepticism was to break through the theological traditions of the older world than the pitiless logic with which Hobbes assailed the very theory of revelation. "To say God hath spoken to man in a dream, is no more than to say man dreamed that God hath spoken to him." "To say one hath seen a vision, or heard a voice, is to say he hath dreamed between sleeping and waking." Religion, in fact, was nothing more than "the fear of invisible powers;" and here, as in all other branches of human science, knowledge dealt with words and not with things. It was man himself who for his own profit created society, by laying down certain of his natural rights and retaining only those of self-preservation. A Covenant between man and man originally created "that great Leviathan called the Commonwealth or State, which is but an artificial man, though of greater stature and strength than the natural, for whose protection and defence it was intended." The fiction of such an "original contract" has long been dismissed from political speculation, but its effect at the time of its first appearance was immense. Its almost universal acceptance put an end to the religious and patriarchal theories of society, on which Kingship had till now founded its claim of a Divine right to authority which no subject might question. But if Hobbes destroyed the old ground of Royal despotism, he laid a new and a firmer one. To create a society at all, he held that the whole body of the governed must have resigned all rights save that of self-preservation into the hands of a single ruler, who was the representative of all. Such a ruler was absolute, for to make terms with him implied a man making terms with himself. The transfer of rights was inalienable, and after generations were as much bound by it as the generation which made the transfer. As the head of the whole body, the ruler judged every question, settled the laws of civil justice or injustice, or decided between religion and superstition. His was a Divine Right, and the only Divine Right, because in him were absorbed all the rights of each of his subjects. It was not in any constitutional check that Hobbes looked for the prevention of tyranny, but in the common education and enlightenment as to their real end and the best mode of reaching it on the part of both subjects and Prince. And the real end of both was the weal of the Commonwealth at large. It was in laying boldly down this end of government, as well as in the basis of contract on which he made government repose, that Hobbes really influenced all later politics. Locke, like his master, derived political authority from the consent of

Digitized by Google

SEC. II. THE RESTORATION. 1660-1667.

the governed, and adopted the common weal as its end. But in the theory of Locke the people remain passively in possession of the power which they have delegated to the Prince, and have the right to withdraw it if it be used for purposes inconsistent with the end which society was formed to promote. To the origin of all power in the people, and the end of all power for the people's good—the two great doctrines of Hobbes—Locke added the right of resistance, the responsibility of princes to their subjects for a due execution of their trust, and the supremacy of legislative assemblies as the voice of the people itself. It was in this modified and enlarged form that the new political philosophy revealed itself in the Revolution of 1688.

### Section II.—The Restoration. 1660–1667.

[*Authorities.*—Clarendon's own account of his ministry in his "Life," Bishop Kennet's "Register," and Burnet's lively "History of my own Times," are our principal sources of information. The life of James the Second given in Macpherson's "Original Papers" is of high value for this and the next period, but must be used with caution. For the relations of the Church and the Dissenters, see Neal's "History of the Puritans," Calamy's "Memoirs of the Ejected Ministers," Mr. Dixon's "Life of William Penn," Baxter's "Autobiography," and Bunyan's account of his sufferings in his various works. The social history of the time is admirably given by Pepys in his "Memoirs." Throughout the whole reign of Charles the Second, the "Constitutional History" of Mr. Hallam is judicious and full in its information.]

**The Restoration.**

It is only by a survey of the larger tendencies of English thought that we can understand the course of English history in the years which followed the Restoration. When Charles the Second entered Whitehall, the work of the Long Parliament seemed undone. Not only was the Monarchy restored, but it was restored without restriction or condition; and of the two great influences which had hitherto served as checks on its power, the first, that of Puritanism, had become hateful to the nation at large, while the second, the tradition of constitutional liberty, was discredited by the issue of the Civil War. But amidst all the tumult of demonstrative loyalty the great "revolution of the seventeenth century," as it has justly been styled, went steadily on. The supreme power was gradually transferred from the Crown to the House of Commons. Step by step, Parliament drew nearer to a solution of the political problem which had so long foiled its efforts, the problem how to make its will the law of administrative action without itself undertaking the task of administration. It is only by carefully fixing our eyes on this transfer of power, and by noting the successive steps towards its realization, that we can understand the complex history of the Restoration and the Revolution.

Digitized by Google

The first acts of the new Government showed a sense that, loyal as was the temper of the nation, its loyalty was by no means the blind devotion of the Cavalier. The chief part in the Restoration had in fact been played by the Presbyterians; and the Presbyterians were still powerful from their exclusive possession of the magistracy and all local authority. The first ministry, therefore, which Charles ventured to form, bore on it the marks of a compromise. Its most influential member was Sir Edward Hyde, the adviser of the King during his exile, who now became Earl of Clarendon and Lord Chancellor. Lord Southampton, a steady Royalist, accepted the post of Lord Treasurer; and the devotion of Ormond was rewarded with a dukedom and the dignity of Lord Steward. But the Presbyterian interest was even more powerfully represented. Monk remained Lord-General with the title of Duke of Albemarle. The King's brother, James, Duke of York, was made Lord Admiral; but the administration of the fleet was virtually in the hands of one of Cromwell's followers, Montagu, the new Earl of Sandwich. Lord Saye and Sele was made Lord Privy Seal. Sir Ashley Cooper was soon rewarded for his services by a barony and the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer. Of the two Secretaries of State, the one, Nicholas, was a devoted Royalist; the other, Morice, was a steady Presbyterian. Of the thirty members of the Privy Council, twelve had borne arms against the King. It was clear that such a ministry was hardly likely to lend itself to a mere policy of reaction; and even its most Royalist members, Clarendon and Southampton, were Royalists of a constitutional type.

**The Convention.**

The policy of the new Government, therefore, fell fairly in with the temper of the Convention, which, after declaring itself a Parliament, proceeded to consider the measures which were requisite for a settlement of the nation. The Convention had been chosen under the ordinances which excluded Royalist "Malignants" from the right of voting; and the bulk of its members were men of Presbyterian sympathies, loyalist to the core, but as averse to despotism as the Long Parliament itself. In its earlier days a member who asserted that those who had fought against the King were as guilty as those who cut off his head was sternly rebuked from the Chair. The first measure which was undertaken by the House, the Bill of Indemnity and Oblivion for all offences committed during the recent troubles, showed at once the moderate character of the Commons. In the punishment of the Regicides indeed, a Presbyterian might well be as zealous as a Cavalier. In spite of a Proclamation he had issued in the first days of his return, in which mercy was virtually promised to all the judges of the late King who surrendered themselves to justice, Charles pressed for revenge on those whom he regarded as his father's murderers, and the Lords went hotly with the King. It is to the credit of the Commons that they steadily resisted the cry for blood. By the original

Digitized by Google

provisions of the Bill of Oblivion and Indemnity only seven of the living Regicides were excluded from pardon; and though the rise of Royalist fervour during the three months in which the bill was under discussion forced the House in the end to leave almost all to the course of justice, the requirement of a special Act of Parliament for the execution of those who had surrendered under the Proclamation protected the lives of most of them. Twenty-eight of the King's Judges were in the end arraigned at the bar, but only thirteen were executed, and only one of these, General Harrison, had played any conspicuous part in the rebellion. Twenty others, who had been prominent in what were now called "the troubles" of the past twenty years were declared incapable of holding office under the State: and by an unjustifiable clause which was introduced into the Act before its final adoption, Sir Harry Vane and General Lambert, though they had taken no part in the King's death, were specially exempted from the general pardon. In dealing with the questions of property which arose from the confiscations and transfers of estates during the Civil Wars the Convention met yet greater difficulties. No opposition was made to the resumption of all Crown-lands by the State, but the Convention desired to protect the rights of those who had purchased Church property, and of those who were in actual possession of private estates which had been confiscated by the Long Parliament, and by the government which succeeded it. The bills however which they prepared for this purpose were delayed by the artifices of Hyde; and at the close of the session the bishops and the evicted Royalists quietly re-entered into the occupation of their old possessions. The Royalists indeed were far from being satisfied with this summary confiscation. Fines and sequestrations had impoverished all the steady adherents of the Royal cause, and had driven many of them to forced sales of their estates; and a demand was made for compensation for their losses and the cancelling of such sales. Without such provisions, said the frenzied Cavaliers, the bill would be "a Bill of Indemnity for the King's enemies, and of Oblivion for his friends." But here the Convention stood firm. All transfers of property by sale were recognized as valid, and all claims of compensation for losses by sequestration were barred by the Act. From the settlement of the nation the Convention passed to the settlement of the relations between the nation and the Crown. So far was the constitutional work of the Long Parliament from being undone, that its more important measures were silently accepted as the base of future government. Not a voice demanded the restoration of the Star Chamber, or of monopolies, or of the Court of High Commission; no one disputed the justice of the condemnation of Ship-money, or the assertion of the sole right of Parliament to grant supplies to the Crown. The Militia, indeed, was placed in the King's hands; but the army was disbanded, though Charles was permitted to keep a few regiments for

Digitized by Google

his guard. The revenue was fixed at £1,200,000; and this sum was granted to the King for life, a grant which might have been perilous for freedom had not the taxes provided to supply the sum fallen constantly below this estimate, while the current expenses of the Crown, even in time of peace, greatly exceeded it. But even for this grant a heavy price was exacted. Though the rights of the Crown over lands held, as the bulk of English estates were held, in military tenure, had ceased to be of any great pecuniary value, they were indirectly a source of considerable power. The right of wardship and of marriage, above all, enabled the sovereign to exercise a galling pressure on every landed proprietor in his social and domestic concerns. Under Elizabeth, the right of wardship had been used to secure the education of all Catholic minors in the Protestant faith; and under James and his successor minors and heiresses had been granted to Court favourites or sold in open market to the highest bidder. But the real value of these rights to the Crown lay in the political pressure which it was able to exert through them on the country gentry. A squire was naturally eager to buy the good will of a sovereign who might soon be the guardian of his daughter and the administrator of his estate. But the same motives which made the Crown cling to this prerogative made the Parliament anxious to do away with it. Its efforts to bring this about under James the First had been foiled by the King's stubborn resistance; but the long interruption of these rights during the wars made their revival almost impossible at the Restoration, and one of the first acts therefore of the Convention was to free the country gentry by abolishing the claims of the Crown to reliefs and wardship, purveyance, and pre-emption, and by the conversion of lands held till then in chivalry into lands held in common socage. In lieu of his rights, Charles accepted a grant of £100,000 a year; a sum which it was originally purposed to raise by a tax on the lands thus exempted from feudal exactions; but which was provided for in the end, with less justice, by a general excise.

**The Cavalier Parliament.**

Successful as the Convention had been in effecting the settlement of political matters, it failed in bringing about a settlement of the Church. In his proclamation from Breda, Charles had promised to respect liberty of conscience, and to assent to any Acts of Parliament which should be presented to him for its security. The Convention was in the main Presbyterian; but it soon became plain that the continuance of a purely Presbyterian system was impossible. "The generality of the people," wrote a shrewd Scotch observer from London, "are doting after Prelacy and the Service-book." The Convention, however, still hoped for some modified form of Episcopalian government which would enable the bulk of the Puritan party to remain within the Church. A large part of the existing clergy, indeed, were Independents, and for these no compromise with Episcopacy was possible: but the greater number were moderate Presby-

Digitized by Google

SEC. II.
THE RESTORATION.
1660-1667.

terians, who were ready "for fear of worse" to submit to such a plan of Church government as Archbishop Usher had proposed, a plan in which the bishop was only the president of a diocesan board of presbyters, and to accept the Liturgy with a few amendments and the omission of the "superstitious practices." It was to a compromise of this kind that the King himself leant at the beginning, and a Royal proclamation declared his approval of the Puritan demands; but a bill introduced by Sir Matthew Hale to turn this proclamation into law was foiled by the opposition of Hyde, and by the promise of a Conference. The ejected Episcopalian clergy who still remained alive entered again into their livings; the bishops returned to their sees; and the dissolution of the Convention-Parliament destroyed the last hope of an ecclesiastical compromise. The tide of loyalty had, in fact, been rising fast during its session, and the influence of this was seen in one of the latest resolutions of the Convention itself. The bodies of Cromwell, Bradshaw, and Ireton were torn by its order from their graves and hung on gibbets at Tyburn, while those of Pym and Blake were cast out of Westminster Abbey into St. Margaret's churchyard. But in the elections for the new Parliament the zeal for Church and King swept all hope of moderation and compromise before it. The new members were for the most part young men, and "the most profane, swearing fellows," wrote a Puritan, Roger Pepys, "that ever I heard in my life." The Presbyterians sank to a handful of fifty members. The loyalty of the Parliament far outran that of Clarendon himself. Though it confirmed the acts of the Convention, it could with difficulty be brought to assent to the Act of Indemnity. The Commons pressed for the prosecution of Vane. Vane was protected alike by the spirit of the law and by the King's pledge to the Convention that, even if convicted of treason, he would not suffer him to be brought to the block. But he was now brought to trial on the charge of treason against a King "kept out of his Royal authority by traitors and rebels," and his spirited defence served as an excuse for his execution. "He is too dangerous a man to let live," Charles wrote with characteristic coolness, "if we can safely put him out of the way." But the new members were yet better Churchmen than loyalists. A common suffering had thrown the gentry and the Episcopalian clergy together, and for the first time in our history the country squires were zealous for the Church. At the opening of their session they ordered every member to receive the communion, and the League and Covenant to be solemnly burnt by the common hangman in Westminster Hall. The bishops were restored to their seats in the House of Lords. The conference at the Savoy between the Episcopalians and Presbyterians broke up in anger, and the few alterations made in the Liturgy were made with a view to disgust rather than to conciliate the Puritan party. The strongholds of this party were the corporations of the

1661.

Digitized by Google

boroughs; and an attempt was made to drive them from these by the Test and Corporation Act, which required a reception of the communion according to the rites of the Anglican Church, a renunciation of the League and Covenant, and a declaration that it was unlawful on any grounds to take up arms against the King, before admission to municipal offices. A more deadly blow was dealt at the Puritans in the renewal of the Act of Uniformity. Not only was the use of the Prayer-book, and the Prayer-book only, enforced in all public worship, but an unfeigned consent and assent was demanded from every minister of the Church to all which was contained in it; while, for the first time since the Reformation, all orders save those conferred by the hands of bishops were legally disallowed. It was in vain that Ashley opposed the bill fiercely in the Lords, and that even Clarendon, who felt that the King's word was at stake, pressed for the insertion of clauses enabling the Crown to grant dispensations from its provisions. Charles, whose aim was to procure a toleration for the Catholics by allowing the Presbyterians to feel the pressure of persecution, assented to the bill while he promised to suspend its execution by the exercise of his prerogative.

**St. Bartholomew's Day.** 1662.

The bishops however were resolute to enforce the law; and on St. Bartholomew's day, the last day allowed for compliance with its requirements, nearly two thousand rectors and vicars, or about a fifth of the English clergy, were driven from their parishes as Nonconformists. No such sweeping change in the religious aspect of the Church had ever been seen before. The changes of the Reformation had been brought about with little change in the clergy itself. Even the severities of the High Commission under Elizabeth ended in the expulsion of a few hundreds. If Laud had gone zealously to work in emptying Puritan pulpits, his zeal had been to a great extent foiled by the restrictions of the law and by the growth of Puritan sentiment in the clergy as a whole. A far wider change had been brought about by the Civil War; but the change had been gradual, and had been wrought for the most part on political or moral rather than on religious grounds. The parsons expelled were expelled as royalists or as unfitted for their office by idleness or vice or inability to preach. The change wrought by St. Bartholomew's day was a distinctly religious change, and it was a change which in its suddenness and completeness stood utterly alone. The rectors and vicars who were driven out were the most learned and the most active of their order. The bulk of the great livings throughout the country were in their hands. They stood at the head of the London clergy, as the London clergy stood in general repute at the head of their class throughout England. They occupied the higher posts at the two Universities. No English divine, save Jeremy Taylor, rivalled Howe as a preacher. No parson was so renowned a controver-



Digitized by Google

sialist, or so indefatigable a parish priest, as Baxter. And behind these men stood a fifth of the whole body of the clergy, men whose zeal and labour had diffused throughout the country a greater appearance of piety and religion than it had ever displayed before. But the expulsion of these men was far more to the Church of England than the loss of their individual services. It was the definite expulsion of a great party which from the time of the Reformation had played the most active and popular part in the life of the Church. It was the close of an effort which had been going on ever since Elizabeth's accession to bring the English Communion into closer relations with the Reformed Communions of the Continent, and into greater harmony with the religious instincts of the nation at large. The Church of England stood from that moment isolated and alone among all the churches of the Christian world. The Reformation had severed it irretrievably from those which still clung to the obedience of the Papacy. By its rejection of all but episcopal orders, the Act of Uniformity severed it as irretrievably from the general body of the Protestant Churches, whether Lutheran or Reformed. And while thus cut off from all healthy religious communion with the world without, it sank into immobility within. With the expulsion of the Puritan clergy, all change, all efforts after reform, all national development, suddenly stopped. From that time to this the Episcopal Church has been unable to meet the varying spiritual needs of its adherents by any modification of its government or its worship. It stands alone among all the religious bodies of Western Christendom in its failure through two hundred years to devise a single new service of prayer or of praise. But if the issues of St. Bartholomew's day have been harmful to the spiritual life of the English Church, they have been in the highest degree advantageous to the cause of religious liberty. At the Restoration religious freedom seemed again to have been lost. Only the Independents and a few despised sects, such as the Quakers, upheld the right of every man to worship God according to the bidding of his own conscience. The great bulk of the Puritan party, with the Presbyterians at its head, were at one with their opponents in desiring a uniformity of worship, if not of belief, throughout the land; and, had the two great parties within the Church held together, their weight would have been almost irresistible. Fortunately the great severance of St. Bartholomew's day drove out the Presbyterians from the Church to which they clung, and forced them into a general union with sects which they had hated till then almost as bitterly as the bishops themselves. A common persecution soon blended the Nonconformists into one. Persecution broke down before the numbers, the wealth, and the political weight of the new sectarians; and the Church, for the first time in its history, found itself confronted with an organized body of Dissenters without its pale. The impossibility

Digitized by Google

of crushing such a body as this wrested from English statesmen the first legal recognition of freedom of worship in the Toleration Act; their rapid growth in later times has by degrees stripped the Church of almost all the exclusive privileges which it enjoyed as a religious body, and now threatens what remains of its official connection with the State. With these remoter consequences however we are not as yet concerned. It is enough to note here that with the Act of Uniformity and the expulsion of the Puritan clergy a new element in our religious and political history, the element of Dissent, the influence of the Nonconformist churches, comes first into play.

**The Persecution.**

The immediate effect of their expulsion on the Puritans was to beget a feeling of despair. Many were for retiring to Holland, others proposed flight to New England and the American colonies. Charles however was anxious to make use of them in carrying out his schemes for a toleration of the Catholics; and fresh hopes of protection were raised by a Royal proclamation, which expressed the King's wish to exempt from the penalties of the Act "those who, living peaceably, do not conform themselves thereunto, through scruple and tenderness of misguided conscience, but modestly and without scandal perform their devotions in their own way." Charles promised to bring a measure to this effect before Parliament in its coming session. The bill which was thus introduced would have enabled the King to dispense, not only with the provisions of the Act of Uniformity, but with all laws and statutes enforcing conformity in worship, or imposing religious tests. Its aim was so obvious, and its unconstitutional character so clear, that even the Nonconformists withdrew from supporting it; and Ashley alone among the Puritan leaders undertook its defence. The threatening attitude of the Commons soon forced the King to withdraw it; but the temper of the Church was now roused, and the hatred of the Nonconformists was embittered by suspicions of the King's secret designs. The Houses extorted from Charles a proclamation for the banishment of Roman Catholic priests; and by their Conventicle Act of the following year, they punished by fine, imprisonment, and transportation, all meetings of more than five persons for any religious worship but that of the Common Prayer. The Five Mile Act, a year later, completed the code of persecution. By its provisions, every clergyman who had been driven out by the Act of Uniformity was called on to swear that he held it unlawful under any pretext to take up arms against the King, and that he would at no time "endeavour any alteration of government in Church or State." In case of refusal, he was forbidden to go within five miles of any borough, or of any place where he had been wont to minister. As the main body of the Nonconformists belonged to the city and trading classes, the effect of this measure was to rob them of any religious teaching at all. But the tide of religious intolerance was now slowly

1663.

1664.

1665.



Digitized by Google

ebbing, and a motion to impose the oath of the Five Mile Act on every person in the nation was rejected in the same session by a majority of six. The sufferings of the Nonconformists indeed could hardly fail to tell on the sympathies of the people. The thirst for revenge, which had been roused by the tyranny of the Presbyterians in their hour of triumph, was satisfied by their humiliation in the hour of defeat. The sight of pious and learned clergymen driven from their homes and their flocks, of religious meetings broken up by the constables, of preachers set side by side with thieves and outcasts in the dock, of gaols crammed with honest enthusiasts whose piety was their only crime, pleaded more eloquently for toleration than all the reasoning in the world. We have a clue to the extent of the persecution from what we know to have been its effect on a single sect. The Quakers had excited alarm by their extravagances of manner, their refusal to bear arms or to take oaths; and a special Act was passed for their repression. They were one of the smallest of the Nonconformist bodies, but more than four thousand were soon in prison, and of these five hundred were imprisoned in London alone. Large as it was, the number rapidly increased: and the King's Declaration of Indulgence, twelve years later, set free twelve thousand Quakers who had found their way to the gaols. Of the sufferings of the expelled clergy one of their own number, Richard Baxter, has given us an account. "Many hundreds of these, with their wives and children, had neither house nor bread. . . . Their congregations had enough to do, besides a small maintenance, to help them out of prisons, or to maintain them there. Though they were as frugal as possible they could hardly live; some lived on little more than brown bread and water, many had but eight or ten pounds a year to maintain a family, so that a piece of flesh has not come to one of their tables in six weeks' time; their allowance could scarce afford them bread and cheese. One went to plow six days and preached on the Lord's Day. Another was forced to cut tobacco for a livelihood." But poverty was the least of their sufferings. They were jeered at by the players. They were hooted through the streets by the mob. "Many of the ministers, being afraid to lay down their ministry after they had been ordained to it, preached to such as would hear them in fields and private houses, till they were apprehended and cast into gaols, where many of them perished." They were excommunicated in the Bishops' Court, or fined for non-attendance at church; and a crowd of informers grew up who made a trade of detecting the meetings they held at midnight. Alleyn, the author of the well-known "Alarm to the Unconverted," died at thirty-six from the sufferings he endured in Taunton Gaol. Vavasour Powell, the apostle of Wales, spent the eleven years which followed the Restoration in prisons at Shrewsbury, Southsea, and Cardiff, till

Digitized by Google

he perished in the Fleet. John Bunyan was for twelve years a prisoner at Bedford.

We have already seen the atmosphere of excited feeling in which the youth of Bunyan had been spent. From his childhood he heard heavenly voices, and saw visions of heaven; from his childhood, too, he had been wrestling with an overpowering sense of sin, which sickness and repeated escapes from death did much as he grew up to deepen. But in spite of his self-reproaches his life was a religious one; and the purity and sobriety of his youth was shown by his admission at seventeen into the ranks of the "New Model." Two years later the war was over, and Bunyan found himself married before he was twenty to a "godly" wife, as young and as poor as himself. So poor were the young couple that they could hardly muster a spoon and a plate between them; and the poverty of their home deepened, perhaps, the gloom of the young tinker's restlessness and religious depression. His wife did what she could to comfort him, teaching him again to read and write, for he had forgotten his school-learning, and reading with him in two little "godly" books which formed his library. But the darkness only gathered the thicker round his imaginative soul. "I walked," he tells us of this time, "to a neighbouring town; and sate down upon a settle in the street, and fell into a very deep pause about the most fearful state my sin had brought me to; and after long musing I lifted up my head; but methought I saw as if the sun that shineth in the heavens did grudge to give me light; and as if the very stones in the street and tiles upon the houses did band themselves against me. Methought that they all combined together to banish me out of the world. I was abhorred of them, and wept to dwell among them, because I had sinned against the Saviour. Oh, how happy now was every creature over I! for they stood fast and kept their station. But I was gone and lost." At last, after more than two years of this struggle, the darkness broke. Bunyan felt himself "converted," and freed from the burthen of his sin. He joined a Baptist church at Bedford, and a few years later he became famous as a preacher. As he held no formal post of minister in the congregation, his preaching even under the Protectorate was illegal and "gave great offence," he tells us, "to the doctors and priests of that county," but he persisted with little real molestation until the Restoration. Six months after the King's return he was committed to Bedford Gaol on a charge of preaching in unlicensed conventicles; and his refusal to promise to abstain from preaching kept him there eleven years. The gaol was crowded with prisoners like himself, and amongst them he continued his ministry, supporting himself by making tagged thread laces, and finding some comfort in the Bible, the "Book of Martyrs," and the writing materials which he was suffered to have with him in his prison. But he was in the

1645.

1653.

Digitized by Google

prime of life; his age was thirty-two when he was imprisoned; and the inactivity and severance from his wife and little children was hard to bear. "The parting with my wife and poor children," he says in words of simple pathos, "hath often been to me in this place as the pulling of the flesh from the bones, and that not only because I am somewhat too fond of those great mercies, but also because I should have often brought to my mind the many hardships, miseries, and wants that my poor family was like to meet with should I be taken from them, especially my poor blind child, who lay nearer to my heart than all besides. Oh, the thoughts of the hardships I thought my poor blind one might go under would break my heart to pieces. 'Poor child,' thought I, 'what sorrow art thou like to have for thy portion in this world! Thou must be beaten, must beg, suffer hunger, cold, nakedness, and a thousand calamities, though I cannot now endure the wind should blow upon thee.'" But suffering could not break his purpose, and Bunyan found compensation for the narrow bounds of his prison in the wonderful activity of his pen. Tracts, controversial treatises, poems, meditations, his "Grace Abounding," and his "Holy City," followed each other in quick succession. It was in his gaol that he wrote the first and greatest part of his "Pilgrim's Progress." 1670-1. In no book do we see more clearly the new imaginative force which had been given to the common life of Englishmen by their study of the Bible. Its English is the simplest and the homeliest English which has ever been used by any great English writer; but it is the English of the Bible. The images of the "Pilgrim's Progress" are the images of prophet and evangelist; it borrows for its tenderer outbursts the very verse of the Song of Songs, and pictures the Heavenly City in the words of the Apocalypse. But so completely has the Bible become Bunyan's life that one feels its phrases as the natural expression of his thoughts. He has lived in the Bible till its words have become his own. He has lived among its visions and voices of heaven till all sense of possible unreality has died away. He tells his tale with such a perfect naturalness that allegories become living things, that the Slough of Despond and Doubting Castle are as real to us as places we see every day, that we know Mr. Legality and Mr. Worldly Wiseman as if we had met them in the street. It is in this amazing reality of impersonation that Bunyan's imaginative genius specially displays itself. But this is far from being his only excellence. In its range, in its directness, in its simple grace, in the ease with which it changes from lively dialogue to dramatic action, from simple pathos to passionate earnestness, in the subtle and delicate fancy which often suffuses its childlike words, in its playful humour, its bold character-painting, in the even and balanced power which passes without effort from the Valley of the Shadow of Death to the land "where the Shining Ones commonly walked, because it was on the

Digitized by Google

borders of heaven," in its sunny kindliness, unbroken by one bitter word, the "Pilgrim's Progress" is among the noblest of English poems. For if Puritanism had first discovered the poetry which contact with the spiritual world awakes in the meanest souls, Bunyan was the first of the Puritans who revealed this poetry to the outer world. The journey of Christian from the City of Destruction to the Heavenly City is simply a record of the life of such a Puritan as Bunyan himself, seen through an imaginative haze of spiritual idealism in which its commonest incidents are heightened and glorified. He is himself the Pilgrim who flies from the City of Destruction, who climbs the hill Difficulty, who faces Apollyon, who sees his loved ones cross the river of Death towards the Heavenly City, and how, because "the hill on which the City was framed was higher than the clouds, they therefore went up through the region of the air, sweetly talking as they went."

**The War with Holland.**

The popularity which the "Pilgrim's Progress" enjoyed from the first proves that the religious sympathies of the English people were still mainly Puritan. Before Bunyan's death in 1688 ten editions of the book had already been sold, and though even Cowper hardly dared to quote it for fear of moving a sneer in the polite world of his day, its favour among the middle classes and the poor has grown steadily from its author's day to our own. It is probably the most popular and the most widely known of all English books. But the inner current of the national life had little relation to the outer history of the Restoration. While Bunyan was lying in Bedford Gaol, and the Church was carrying on its bitter persecution of the Nonconformists, England was plunging into a series of humiliations and losses without example in her history. The fatal strife with Holland which had been closed by the wisdom of Cromwell was renewed. The quarrel of the Dutch and English merchants on the Guinea coast, where both sought a monopoly of the trade in gold dust and slaves, was fanned by the ambition of the Duke of York and by the resentment of Charles himself at the insults he had suffered from Holland in his exile into a war. An obstinate battle off Lowestoft ended in a victory for the English fleet; but in a subsequent encounter with De Ruyter off the North Foreland Monk and his fleet were only saved from destruction by the arrival of a reinforcement under Prince Rupert. "They may be killed," said De Witt, "but they cannot be conquered;" and the saying was as true of one side as of the other. A third battle, as hard-fought as its predecessors, ended in the triumph of the English, and their fleet sailed along the coast of Holland, burning ships and towns. But the thought of triumph was soon forgotten in the terrible calamities which fell on the capital. In six months a hundred thousand Londoners died of the Plague which broke out in its crowded streets; and the Plague was followed by a fire, which beginning near Fish Street reduced the whole city to ashes from the Tower to the Temple. Thirteen hundred houses

1664.

1665.

Digitized by Google

SEC. III. CHARLES THE SECOND. 1667-1673.

and ninety churches were destroyed. The loss of merchandise and property was beyond count. The Treasury was empty, and neither ships nor forts were manned, when the Dutch fleet appeared in the Nore, advanced unopposed up the Thames to Gravesend, forced the boom which protected the Medway, burnt three men-of-war which lay anchored in the river, and for six weeks sailed proudly along the southern coast, the masters of the Channel.

1667.

## Section III.—Charles the Second. 1667—1673.

[*Authorities.*—To Burnet, Kennett, and the other authorities mentioned for the preceding period, we may add the Memoirs of Sir William Temple, with Lord Macaulay's well-known Essay on that statesman, Reresby's Memoirs, and the works of Andrew Marvell. The "Memoirs of the Count de Grammont," by Anthony Hamilton, give a witty and amusing picture of the life of the Count and of Charles himself. Lingard becomes of high importance during this and the following period from the original materials he has used, and from his clear and dispassionate statement of the Catholic side of the question. See too for this the account of James himself in Macpherson's "State Papers." Dalrymple, in his "Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland," was the first to discover the real secret of the negotiations with France; but all previous researches have been superseded by those of M. Mignet, whose "Négociations relatives à la succession d'Espagne" (Paris, 1835) is indispensable for a real knowledge of this and the following period.]

---

**Charles the Second.**

The thunder of the Dutch guns in the Medway and the Thames woke England to a bitter sense of its degradation. The dream of loyalty was over. "Everybody now-a-days," Pepys tells us, "reflect upon Oliver and commend him, what brave things he did, and made all the neighbour princes fear him." But Oliver's successor was coolly watching this shame and discontent of his people with the one aim of turning it to his own advantage. To Charles the Second the degradation of England was only a move in the political game which he was playing, a game played with so consummate a secrecy and skill that it deceived not only the closest observers of his own day but still misleads historians of ours. What his subjects saw in their King was a pleasant, brown-faced gentleman playing with his spaniels, or drawing caricatures of his ministers, or flinging cakes to the water-fowl in the park. To all outer seeming Charles was the most consummate of idlers. "He delighted," says one of his courtiers, "in a bewitching kind of pleasure called sauntering." The business-like Pepys soon discovered that "the King do mind nothing but pleasures, and hates the very sight or thoughts of business." He only laughed when Tom Killigrew frankly told him that badly as things were going there was one man whose employment would soon set them right, "and this is one Charles Stuart, who now spends his time in employing his lips about the Court, and hath no other employment." That Charles had great natural

Digitized by Google

parts no one doubted. In his earlier days of defeat and danger he showed a cool courage and presence of mind which never failed him in the many perilous moments of his reign. His temper was pleasant and social, his manners perfect, and there was a careless freedom and courtesy in his address which won over everybody who came into his presence. His education indeed had been so grossly neglected that he could hardly read a plain Latin book; but his natural quickness and intelligence showed itself in his pursuit of chemistry and anatomy, and in the interest he showed in the scientific inquiries of the Royal Society. Like Peter the Great, his favourite study was that of naval architecture, and he piqued himself on being a clever ship-builder. He had some little love too for art and poetry, and a taste for music. But his shrewdness and vivacity showed itself most in his endless talk. He was fond of telling stories, and he told them with a good deal of grace and humour. His humour indeed never forsook him: even on his death-bed he turned to the weeping courtiers around and whispered an apology for having been so unconscionable a time in dying. He held his own fairly with the wits of his Court, and bandied repartees on equal terms with Sedley or Buckingham. Even Rochester in his merciless epigram was forced to own that "Charles never said a foolish thing." He had inherited in fact his grandfather's gift of pithy sayings, and his cynical irony often gave an amusing turn to them. When his brother, the most unpopular man in England, solemnly warned him of plots against his life, Charles laughingly bid him set all fear aside. "They will never kill me, James," he said, "to make you king." But courage and wit and ability seemed to have been bestowed on him in vain. Charles hated business. He gave no sign of ambition. The one thing he seemed in earnest about was sensual pleasure, and he took his pleasure with a cynical shamelessness which roused the disgust even of his shameless courtiers. Mistress followed mistress, and the guilt of a troop of profligate women was blazoned to the world by the gift of titles and estates. The Royal bastards were set amongst English nobles. The Ducal house of Grafton springs from the King's adultery with Barbara Palmer, whom he created Duchess of Cleveland. The Dukes of St. Albans owe their origin to his intrigue with Nell Gwynn, a player and a courtezan. Louise de Querouaille, a mistress sent by France to win him to its interests, became Duchess of Portsmouth, and ancestress of the house of Richmond. An earlier mistress, Lucy Walters, had made him father in younger days of the boy whom he raised to the Dukedom of Monmouth, and to whom the Dukes of Buccleugh trace their line. But Charles was far from being content with these recognized mistresses, or with a single form of self-indulgence. Gambling and drinking helped to fill up the vacant moments when he could no longer toy with his favourites or bet at Newmarket. No thought of remorse or of shame seems ever to have crossed his mind. "He could not think

Digitized by Google

God would make a man miserable," he said once, "only for taking a little pleasure out of the way." From shame indeed he was shielded by his cynical disbelief in human virtue. Virtue he regarded simply as a trick by which clever hypocrites imposed upon fools. Honour among men seemed to him as mere a pretence as chastity among women. Gratitude he had none, for he looked upon self-interest as the only motive of men's actions, and though soldiers had died and women had risked their lives for him, he "loved others as little as he thought they loved him." But if he felt no gratitude for benefits he felt no resentment for wrongs. He was incapable either of love or of hate. The only feeling he retained for his fellow-men was that of an amused contempt.

**The King's policy.**

It was difficult for Englishmen to believe that any real danger to liberty could come from an idler and a voluptuary such as Charles the Second. But in the very difficulty of believing this lay half the King's strength. He had in fact no taste whatever for the despotism of the Stuarts who had gone before him. His shrewdness laughed his grandfather's theories of Divine Right down the wind. His indolence made such a personal administration as that which his father delighted in burthensome to him: he was too humorous a man to care for the pomp and show of power, and too good-natured a man to play the tyrant. "He told Lord Essex," Burnet says, "that he did not wish to be like a Grand Signior, with some mutes about him, and bags of bowstrings to strangle men; but he did not think he was a king so long as a company of fellows were looking into his actions, and examining his ministers as well as his accounts." "A king," he thought, "who might be checked, and have his ministers called to an account, was but a king in name." In other words, he had no settled plan of tyranny, but he meant to rule as independently as he could, and from the beginning to the end of his reign there never was a moment when he was not doing something to carry out his aim. But he carried it out in a tentative, irregular fashion which it was as hard to detect as to meet. Whenever there was any strong opposition he gave way. If popular feeling demanded the dismissal of his ministers, he dismissed them. If it protested against his declaration of Indulgence, he recalled it. If it cried for victims in the frenzy of the Popish Plot, he gave it victims till the frenzy was at an end. It was easy for Charles to yield and to wait, and just as easy for him to take up the thread of his purpose again the moment the pressure was over. The one fixed resolve which overrode every other thought in the King's mind was a resolve "not to set out on his travels again." His father had fallen through a quarrel with the two Houses, and Charles was determined to remain on good terms with the Parliament till he was strong enough to pick a quarrel to his profit. He treated the Lords with an easy familiarity which robbed opposition of its seriousness.

Digitized by Google

"Their debates amused him," he said in his indolent way; and he stood chatting before the fire while peer after peer poured invectives on his ministers, and laughed louder than the rest when Shaftesbury directed his coarsest taunts at the barrenness of the Queen. Courtiers were entrusted with the secret "management" of the Commons: obstinate country gentlemen were brought to the Royal closet to kiss the King's hand and listen to the King's pleasant stories of his escape after Worcester; and yet more obstinate country gentlemen were bribed. Where bribes, flattery, and management failed, Charles was content to yield and to wait till his time came again. Meanwhile he went on patiently gathering up what fragments of the old Royal power still survived, and availing himself of whatever new resources offered themselves. If he could not undo what Puritanism had done in England, he could undo its work in Scotland and in Ireland. Before the Civil War these kingdoms had served as useful checks on English liberty, and by simply regarding the Union which the Long Parliament and the Protector had brought about as a nullity in law it was possible they might become checks again. In his undoing the Union Charles was supported by Clarendon and the Constitutional loyalists, partly from sheer abhorrence of changes wrought by their political opponents, and partly from a dread that the Scotch and Irish members would form a party in the English Parliament which would always be at the service of the Crown. In both the lesser kingdoms too a measure which seemed to restore somewhat of their independence was for the moment popular. But the results of this step were quick in developing themselves. In Scotland the Covenant was at once abolished. The new Scotch Parliament at Edinburgh, which soon won the name of the Drunken Parliament, outdid the wildest loyalty of the English Cavaliers by annulling in a single Act all the proceedings of its predecessors during the last eight-and-twenty years. By this measure the whole Church system of Scotland fell legally to the ground. The General Assembly had already been prohibited from meeting by Cromwell; the kirk-sessions and ministers' synods were now suspended. The bishops were again restored to their spiritual pre-eminence, and to their seats in Parliament. An iniquitous trial sent the Earl of Argyle, the only noble strong enough to oppose the Royal will, to the block. The government was entrusted to a knot of profligate statesmen who were directed by Lord Lauderdale, one of the ablest and most unscrupulous of the King's ministers; and their policy was steadily directed to the two purposes of humbling Presbyterianism—as the force which could alone restore Scotland to freedom and enable her to lend aid as before to English liberty in any struggle with the Crown—and of raising a Royal army which might be ready in case of trial to march over the border to the King's support. In Ireland the dissolution of the Union brought back the bishops to their

Digitized by Google

sees; but whatever wish Charles may have had to restore the balance of Catholic and Protestant as a source of power to the Crown was baffled by the obstinate resistance of the Protestant settlers to any plans for redressing the confiscations of Cromwell. Five years of bitter struggle between the dispossessed loyalists and the new occupants left the Protestant ascendency unimpaired; and in spite of a nominal surrender of one-third of the confiscated estates to their old possessors, hardly a sixth of the profitable land in the island remained in Catholic holding. The claims of the Duke of Ormond too made it necessary to leave the government in his hands, and Ormond's loyalty was too moderate and constitutional to lend itself to any of the schemes of absolute rule which under Tyrconnell played so great a part in the next reign. But the severance of the two kingdoms from England was in itself a gain to the Royal authority; and Charles turned quietly to the building up of a Royal army at home. A standing army had become so hateful a thing to the body of the nation, and above all to the Royalists whom the New Model had trodden under foot, that it was impossible to propose its establishment. But in the mind of both the Royal brothers their father's downfall had been owing to the want of a disciplined force which would have trampled out the first efforts of national resistance; and while disbanding the New Model, Charles availed himself of the alarm created by a mad rising of some Fifth-Monarchy men in London under an old soldier called Venner to retain five thousand horse and foot in his service under the name of his guards. A body of "gentlemen of quality and veteran soldiers, excellently clad, mounted, and ordered," was thus kept ready for service near the Royal person; and in spite of the scandal which it aroused the King persisted, steadily but cautiously, in gradually increasing its numbers. Twenty years later it had grown to a force of seven thousand foot and one thousand seven hundred horse and dragoons at home, with a reserve of six fine regiments abroad in the service of the United Provinces.

**Charles and France.**

But Charles was too quick-witted a man to believe, as his brother James believed, that it was possible to break down English freedom by the Royal power or by a few thousand men in arms. It was still less possible by such means to break down, as he wished to break down, English Protestantism. In heart, whether the story of his renunciation of Protestantism during his exile be true or no, he had long ceased to be a Protestant. Whatever religious feeling he had was on the side of Catholicism; he encouraged conversions among his courtiers, and the last act of his life was to seek formal admission into the Roman Church. But his feelings were rather political than religious. He saw that despotism in the State could hardly co-exist with free inquiry and free action in matters of the conscience, and that government, in his own words, "was a safer and easier thing where the

Digitized by Google

authority was believed infallible and the faith and submission of the people were implicit." The difficulties of a change of religion probably seemed the less to him that he had long lived abroad, where the sight of a people changing its belief with a change in its sovereign's faith was not a very rare one. But though he counted much on the dissensions between Protestant Churchmen and Protestant Dissenters, and two years after his accession despatched a secret agent to Rome to arrange a reconciliation with the Papacy, he saw that for any real success in his political or religious aims he must seek resources elsewhere than at home. At this moment France was the dominant power in Europe. Its young King, Lewis the Fourteenth, avowed himself the champion of Catholicism and despotism against civil and religious liberty throughout the world. France was the wealthiest of European powers, and her subsidies could free Charles from dependence on his Parliament. Her army was the finest in the world, and French soldiers could put down any resistance from English patriots. The aid of Lewis could alone realize the aims of Charles, and Charles was freed by nature from any shame or reluctance to pay the price which Lewis demanded for his aid. The price was that of a silent concurrence in his designs on Spain. Robbed of its chief source of wealth by the revolt of the United Provinces and the decay of Flanders, enfeebled within by the persecution of the Inquisition, by the suppression of civil freedom, and by a ruinous financial oppression, Spain had not only ceased to threaten Europe but herself trembled at the threats of France. The aim of Lewis was to rob it of the Low Countries, but the presence of the French in Flanders was equally distasteful to England and to Holland, and in such a contest Spain was sure of the aid both of these states and of the Empire. For some years Lewis contented himself with perfecting his army and preparing by skilful negotiations to make such a league of the great powers against him impossible. His first success in England was in the marriage of the King. Portugal, which had only just shaken off the rule of Spain, was really dependent upon France; and in accepting the hand of Catharine of Braganza in spite of the protests of Spain, Charles announced his adhesion to the alliance of Lewis. Already English opinion saw the danger of such a course, and veered round to the Spanish side. As early as 1661 the London mob backed the Spanish ambassador in a street squabble for precedence with the ambassador of France. "We do all naturally love the Spanish," says Pepys, "and hate the French." The sale of Dunkirk, the one result of Cromwell's victories, to France fanned the national irritation to frenzy; and the war with Holland seemed at one time likely to end in a war with Lewis. The war was in itself a serious stumbling-block in the way of his projects. To aid either side was to throw the other on the aid of Austria and Spain, and to build up a league which

Digitized by Google

would check France in its aims; and yet the peace which could alone enable Lewis to seize Flanders by keeping the states of Europe disunited was impossible without some sort of intervention. He was forced therefore to give aid to Holland, and the news of his purpose at once roused England to a hope of war. When Charles announced it to the Houses, "there was a great noise," says Louvois, "in the Parliament to show the joy of the two Houses at the prospect of a fight with us." But the dexterous delays of Charles were seconded by the skill with which Lewis limited his aid to the exact force which was needful to bring about a close of the war, and the sudden conclusion of peace again left the ground clear for his diplomatic intrigues.

**The Fall of Clarendon.**

In England the irritation was great and universal, but it took a turn which helped to carry out the plans of the King. From the moment when his bill to vest a dispensing power in the Crown had been defeated by Clarendon's stubborn opposition, Charles had resolved to rid himself of the Chancellor. The Presbyterian party, represented by Ashley, united with Arlington and the ministers who were really in favour of Catholic-
1663. ism to bring about his overthrow. But Clarendon was still strong in the support of the House of Commons, whose Churchmanship was as resolute as his own. Foiled in their efforts to displace him, his rivals availed themselves of the jealousy of the merchant-class to drive him
1665. against his will into the war with Holland; and though the Chancellor succeeded in forcing the Five Mile Act through the two Houses in the teeth of Ashley's protests, the calculations of his enemies were soon verified. The failures and shame of the war broke the union between Clarendon and the Parliament; his pride and venality had made him unpopular with the nation at large; and the threat of an impeachment
1667 enabled Charles to gratify his long-hoarded revenge by the dismissal of the Chancellor from his office, and by an order to quit the realm. By the exile of Clarendon, the death of Southampton, and the retirement of Ormond and Nicholas, the Cavalier party in the Council ceased to exist; and the section which had originally represented the Presbyterians, and which under the guidance of Ashley had struggled in vain for toleration against the Churchmen and the Parliament, came to the front of affairs. The religious policy of Charles had as yet been defeated by the sturdy Churchmanship of the Parliament, the influence of Clarendon, and the reluctance of the Presbyterians as a body to accept the Royal "indulgence" at the price of a toleration of Catholicism and a recognition of the King's power to dispense with Parliamentary statutes. But there were signs in the recent conduct of the Parliament and in its break with the Chancellor that the policy of persecution had been overdone. Charles trusted that the pressure put on the Nonconformists by the Conventicle Act and the Five Mile Act would drive them to seek relief at almost any cost, and he again

Digitized by Google

proposed a general toleration. He looked to Ashley and his party for support. But their temper was already changed. Instead of toleration they pressed for a union of Protestants which would have utterly foiled the King's projects; and a scheme of Protestant comprehension, which had been approved by the moderate divines on both sides, by Tillotson and Stillingfleet on the part of the Church, as well as by Manton and Baxter on the part of the Nonconformists, was laid by the new Minister before the House of Commons. Even its rejection failed to bring Ashley and his party back to their old position. They were still for toleration, but only for a toleration the benefit of which did not extend to Catholics, "in respect the laws have determined the principles of the Romish religion to be inconsistent with the safety of your Majesty's person and government." The policy of the Council at home was determined, indeed, by the look of public affairs abroad. Lewis had quickly shown the real cause of the eagerness with which he had pressed on the Peace of Breda between England and the Dutch. He had secured the non-interference of the Emperor by a secret treaty which shared the Spanish dominions between the two monarchs in case the King of Spain died without an heir. England, as he believed, was held in check by Charles, and Holland was too exhausted by the late war to interfere alone. On the very day therefore on which the treaty was signed he sent in his formal claims on the Low Countries; his army at once took the field, and the fall of six fortresses without resistance left Turenne master of Flanders. Holland at once protested and armed; but it could do nothing without aid, and its appeal to England remained unanswered. Lewis was ready to pay a high price for English neutrality. He offered to admit England to a share in the eventual partition of the Spanish monarchy, and to assign to her the American possessions of the Spanish crown, if she would assent to his schemes on the Low Countries. Charles was already, in fact, engaged in secret negotiations on this basis, but the projects of the King were soon checked by the threatening tone of the Parliament, and by the attitude of his own ministers. To Ashley and his followers an increase of the French power seemed dangerous to English Protestantism. Even Arlington, Catholic as in heart he was, thought more of the political interests of England, and of the invariable resolve of its statesmen since Elizabeth's day to keep the French out of Flanders, than of the interests of Catholicism. Lewis, warned of his danger, still strove to win over English opinion by offers of peace on moderate terms, while he was writing to Turenne, "I am turning over in my head things that are far from impossible, and go to carry them into execution whatever they may cost." Three armies were, in fact, ready to march on Spain, Germany, and Flanders, when Arlington despatched Sir William Temple to the Hague, and

1670.

1667.

1668.

Digitized by Google

SEC. III.
CHARLES THE SECOND.
1667-1673.

**The Treaty of Dover.**

the signature of a Triple Alliance between England, Holland, and Sweden bound Lewis to the terms he had offered as a blind, and forced on him the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle.

Few measures have won a greater popularity than the Triple Alliance. "It is the only good public thing," says Pepys, "that hath been done since the King came to England." Even the Tory Dryden counted among the worst of Shaftesbury's crimes that "the Triple Bond he broke." In form indeed the Alliance simply bound Lewis to adhere to terms of peace proposed by himself, and those advantageous terms. But, in fact, as we have seen, it utterly ruined his plans. It brought about that union of the powers of Europe against which, as he felt instinctively, his ambition would dash itself in vain. It was Arlington's aim to make the Alliance the nucleus of a greater confederation; and he tried not only to perpetuate it, but to include within it the Swiss Cantons, the Empire, and the House of Austria. His efforts were foiled; but the "Triple Bond" bore within it the germs of the Grand Alliance which at last saved Europe. To England it at once brought back the reputation which she had lost since the death of Cromwell. It was, in fact, a return to the Protector's policy of a league with the Protestant powers of the North as a security against the aggression of the Catholic powers of the South. But it was not so much the action of England which had galled the pride of Lewis, as the energy and success of Holland. That "a nation of shopkeepers" (for Lewis applied the phrase to Holland long before Napoleon applied it to England) should have foiled his plans at the very moment of their realization, "stung him," he owned, "to the quick." If he refrained from an instant attack it was to nurse a surer revenge. His steady aim during the three years which followed the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was to isolate the United Provinces, to bring about again the neutrality of the Empire, to break the Triple Alliance by detaching Sweden and by securing Charles, and to leave his prey without help, save from the idle goodwill of Brandenburg and Spain. His diplomacy was everywhere successful, but it was nowhere so successful as with England. Charles had been stirred to a momentary pride by the success of the Triple Alliance, but he had never seriously abandoned his policy, and he was resolute at last to play an active part in realizing it. It was clear that little was to be hoped for from his old plans of uniting the Catholics and the Nonconformists, and from this moment he surrendered himself utterly to France. The Triple Alliance was hardly concluded when he declared to Lewis his purpose of entering into an alliance with him, offensive and defensive. He owned to being the only man in his kingdom who desired such a league, but he was determined to realize his desire, whatever might be the sentiments of his ministers. His ministers, indeed, he meant either to bring over to his schemes or to outwit. Two of them, Arlington and Sir Thomas Clifford, were Catholics in

Digitized by Google

heart like the King; and they were summoned, with the Duke of York, who had already secretly embraced Catholicism, to a conference in which Charles, after pledging them to secresy, declared himself a Catholic, and asked their counsel as to the means of establishing the Catholic religion in his realm. It was resolved by the four to apply to Lewis for aid in this purpose; and Charles proceeded to seek from the King a "protection," to use the words of the French ambassador, "of which he has always hoped to feel the powerful effects in the execution of his design of changing the present state of religion in England for a better, and of establishing his authority so as to be able to retain his subjects in the obedience they owe him." He offered to declare his religion, and to join France in an attack on Holland, if Lewis would grant him a subsidy equal to a million a year. On this basis a secret treaty was negotiated in the year 1670 at Dover between Charles and his sister Henrietta, the Duchess of Orleans. It provided that Charles should announce his conversion, and that in case of any disturbance arising from such a step he should be supported by a French army and a French subsidy. War was to be declared by both powers against Holland, England furnishing a small land force, but bearing the chief burthen of the contest at sea, on condition of an annual subsidy of three millions of francs. In the event of the King of Spain's death without a son, Charles promised to support France in her claims upon Flanders.

1670.

**The Declaration of Indulgence.**

Nothing marks better the political profligacy of the age than that Arlington, the author of the Triple Alliance, should have been chosen as the confidant of Charles in his Treaty of Dover. But to all save Arlington and Clifford the King's change of religion or his political aims remained utterly unknown. It would have been impossible to obtain the consent of the party in the Royal Council which represented the old Presbyterians, of Ashley or Lauderdale or the Duke of Buckingham, to the Treaty of Dover. But it was possible to trick them into approval of a war with Holland by playing on their desire for a toleration of the Nonconformists. The announcement of the King's Catholicism was therefore deferred; and a series of mock negotiations, carried on through Buckingham, ended in the conclusion of a sham treaty which was communicated to Lauderdale and to Ashley, a treaty which suppressed all mention of the religious changes or of the promise of French aid in bringing them about, and simply stipulated for a joint war against the Dutch. In such a war there was no formal breach of the Triple Alliance, for the Triple Alliance only provided against an attack on the dominions of Spain, and Ashley and his colleagues were lured into assent to it in 1671 by the promise of a toleration on their own terms. Charles in fact yielded the point to which he had hitherto clung, and, as Ashley demanded, promised that no Catholic should be benefited by the Indulgence. The

1671.



Digitized by Google

SEC. III.
CHARLES THE SECOND.
1667-1673.

bargain once struck, and his ministers outwitted, it only remained for Charles to outwit his Parliament. A large subsidy was demanded for the fleet, under the pretext of upholding the Triple Alliance, and the subsidy was no sooner granted than the two Houses were adjourned. Fresh supplies were obtained by closing the Exchequer and suspending—under Clifford's advice—the payment of either principal or interest on loans advanced to the public Treasury. The measure spread bankruptcy among half the goldsmiths of London; but it was followed in 1672 by one yet more startling, the Declaration of Indulgence. By virtue of his ecclesiastical powers the King ordered "that all manner of penal laws on matters ecclesiastical against whatever sort of Nonconformists or recusants should be from that day suspended," and gave liberty of public worship to all dissidents save Catholics, who were allowed to practise their religion only in private houses. The effect of the Declaration went far to justify Ashley and his colleagues (if anything could justify their course) in the bargain by which they purchased toleration. Ministers returned, after years of banishment, to their homes and their flocks. Chapels were reopened. The gaols were emptied. Bunyan left his prison at Bedford; and thousands of Quakers, who had been the especial objects of persecution, were set free to worship God after their own fashion.

1672.

The War with Holland.

The Declaration of Indulgence was at once followed by a declaration of war against the Dutch on the part of both England and France; and the success of the Allies seemed at first complete. The French army passed the Rhine, overran three of the States without opposition, and pushed its outposts to within sight of Amsterdam. It was only by skill and desperate courage that the Dutch ships under De Ruyter held the English fleet under the Duke of York at bay in an obstinate battle off the coast of Suffolk. The triumph of the English cabinet was shown in the elevation of the leaders of both its parties. Ashley was made Chancellor and Earl of Shaftesbury, and Clifford became Lord Treasurer. But the Dutch were saved by the pride with which Lewis rejected their offers of submission, and by the approach of winter which suspended his operations. The plot of the two Courts hung for success on the chances of a rapid surprise; and with the appointment of the young Prince of Orange to the command of the Dutch army all chance of a surprise was over. Young as he was, William of Orange at once displayed the cool courage and tenacity of his race. "Do you not see your country is lost?" asked the Duke of Buckingham, who had been sent to negotiate at the Hague. "There is a sure way never to see it lost," replied William, "and that is, to die in the last ditch." The unexpected delay forced on Charles a fresh assembly of the Parliament; for the supplies which he had so unscrupulously procured were already exhausted, while the closing of the Treasury had shaken all credit and rendered it impossible

Digitized by Google

to raise a loan. It was necessary in 1673 to appeal to the Commons, but the Commons met in a mood of angry distrust. The war, unpopular as it was, they left alone. What overpowered all other feelings was a vague sense, which we know now to have been justified by the facts, that liberty and religion were being unscrupulously betrayed. There was a suspicion that the whole armed force of the nation was in Catholic hands. The Duke of York was believed to be in heart a Papist, and he was in command of the fleet. Catholics had been placed as officers in the force which was being raised for the war in Holland, and a French general, the Count of Schomberg, had been sent to take command of it. Lady Castlemaine, the King's mistress, paraded her conversion; and doubts were fast gathering over the Protestantism of the King. There was a general suspicion that a plot was on foot for the establishment of Catholicism and despotism, and that the war and the Indulgence were parts of the plot. The change of temper in the Commons was marked by the appearance of what was from that time called the Country party, with Lords Russell and Cavendish and Sir William Coventry at its head, a party which sympathized with the Nonconformists but looked on it as its first duty to guard against the designs of the Court. As to the Declaration of Indulgence however, all parties in the House were at one. The Commons resolved "that penal statutes in matters ecclesiastical cannot be suspended but by consent of Parliament," and refused supplies till the Declaration was recalled. The King yielded; but the Declaration was no sooner recalled than a Test Act was passed through both Houses without opposition, which required from everyone in the civil and military employment of the State the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, a declaration against transubstantiation, and a reception of the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England. Clifford at once counselled resistance, and Buckingham talked flightily about bringing the army to London, but Arlington saw that all hope of carrying the "great plan" through was at an end, and pressed Charles to yield. A dissolution was the King's only resource, but in the temper of the nation a new Parliament would have been yet more violent than the present one; and Charles sullenly gave way. No measure has ever brought about more startling results. The Duke of York owned himself a Catholic, and resigned his office as Lord High Admiral. Throngs of excited people gathered round the Lord Treasurer's house at the news that Clifford, too, had owned to being a Catholic and had laid down his staff of office. Their resignation was followed by that of hundreds of others in the army and the civil service of the Crown. On public opinion the effect was wonderful. "I dare not write all the strange talk of the town," says Evelyn. The resignations were held to have proved the existence of the dangers which the Test Act had been passed to meet. From this moment all trust in Charles was at



Digitized by Google

SEC. IV. DANBY. 1673-1678.

an end. "The King," Shaftesbury said bitterly, "who if he had been so happy as to have been born a private gentleman had certainly passed for a man of good parts, excellent breeding, and well natured, hath now, being a Prince, brought his affairs to that pass that there is not a person in the world, man or woman, that dares rely upon him or put any confidence in his word or friendship."

## Section IV.—Danby. 1673–1678.

[*Authorities.*—As before. Mr. Christie's "Life of Shaftesbury," a defence, and in some respects a successful defence, of that statesman's career, throws a fresh light on the policy of the Whig party during this period.]

---

**Shaftesbury.**

The one man in England on whom the discovery of the King's perfidy fell with the most crushing effect was the Chancellor, Lord Shaftesbury. Throughout his life Ashley Cooper had piqued himself on a penetration which read the characters of men around him, and on a political instinct which discerned every coming change. His self-reliance was wonderful. In mere boyhood he saved his estate from the greed of his guardians by boldly appealing in person to Noy, who was then Attorney-General. As an undergraduate at Oxford he organized a rebellion of the freshmen against the oppressive customs which were enforced by the senior men of his college, and succeeded in abolishing them. At eighteen he was a member of the Short Parliament. On the outbreak of the Civil War he took part with the King; but in the midst of the Royal successes he foresaw the ruin of the Royal cause, passed to the Parliament, attached himself to the fortunes of Cromwell, and became member of the Council of State. A temporary disgrace during the last years of the Protectorate only quickened him to a restless hatred which did much to bring about its fall. We have already seen his bitter invectives against the dead Protector, his intrigues with Monk, and the active part which he took, as member of the Council of State, in the King's recall. Charles rewarded his services with a peerage, and with promotion to a foremost share in the Royal Councils. Ashley was then a man of forty, and under the Commonwealth he had been famous, in Dryden's contemptuous phrase, as "the loudest bagpipe of the squeaking train;" but he was no sooner a minister of Charles than he flung himself into the debauchery of the Court with an ardour which surprised even his master. "You are the wickedest dog in England!" laughed Charles at some unscrupulous jest of his councillor's. "Of a subject, Sir, I believe I am!" was the unabashed reply. But the debauchery of Ashley was simply a mask. He was, in fact, temperate by nature and habit, and his ill-health rendered any great excess

Digitized by Google

impossible. Men soon found that the courtier who lounged in Lady Castlemaine's boudoir, or drank and jested with Sedley and Buckingham, was a diligent and able man of business. "He is a man," says the puzzled Pepys, three years after the Restoration, "of great business, and yet of pleasure and dissipation too." His rivals were as envious of the ease and mastery with which he dealt with questions of finance, as of the "nimble wit" which won the favour of the King. Even in later years his industry earned the grudging praise of his enemies. Dryden owned that as Chancellor he was "swift to despatch and easy of access," and wondered at the restless activity which "refused his age the needful hours of rest." His activity indeed was the more wonderful that his health was utterly broken. An accident in early days left behind it an abiding weakness, whose traces were seen in the furrows which seared his long pale face, in the feebleness of his health, and the nervous tremor which shook his puny frame. The "pigmy body" seemed "fretted to decay" by the "fiery soul" within it. But pain and weakness brought with them no sourness of spirit. Ashley was attacked more unscrupulously than any statesman save Walpole; but Burnet, who did not love him, owns that he was never bitter or angry in speaking of his assailants. Even the wit with which he crushed them was commonly good-humoured. "When will you have done preaching?" a bishop murmured testily, as Shaftesbury was speaking in the House of Peers. "When I am a bishop, my Lord!" was the laughing reply.

**Shaftesbury's Policy.**

As a statesman Ashley not only stood high among his contemporaries from his wonderful readiness and industry, but he stood far above them in his scorn of personal profit. Even Dryden, while raking together every fault in the Chancellor, owns that his hands were clean. As a political leader his position was to modern eyes odd enough. In religion he was at best a Deist, with some fanciful notions "that after death our souls lived in stars," and his life was that of a debauchee. But, Deist and debauchee as he was, he represented, as we have seen, the Presbyterian and Nonconformist party in the Royal Council. He was the steady and vehement advocate of toleration, but his advocacy was based on purely political grounds. He saw that persecution would fail to bring back the Dissenters to the Church, and that the effort to recall them only left Protestants disunited and at the mercy of their enemies. But in the temper of England after the Restoration he saw no hope of obtaining toleration save from the policy of the King. Wit, debauchery, rapidity in the despatch of business, were all used as means to keep Charles firm in his plans of toleration, and to secure him as a friend in the struggle which Ashley carried on against the intolerance of Clarendon. Charles, as we have seen, had his own game to play and his own reasons for protecting Ashley during his vehement but fruitless struggle against

Digitized by Google

the Test and Corporation Act, the Act of Uniformity, and the persecution of the dissidents. Fortune at last smiled on the unscrupulous ability with which he entangled Clarendon in the embarrassments of the Dutch war of 1664, and took advantage of the alienation of the Parliament to ensure his fall. Of the yet more unscrupulous bargain which followed we have already spoken. Ashley bought, as he believed, the Declaration of Indulgence, the release of the imprisoned Nonconformists, and freedom of worship for all dissidents, at the price of a consent to the second attack on Holland; and he was looked on by the public at large as the minister most responsible both for the measures he advised and the measures he had nothing to do with. But while facing the gathering storm of unpopularity Ashley learnt in a moment of drunken confidence the secret of the King's religion. He owned to a friend "his trouble at the black cloud which was gathering over England;" but, troubled as he was, he still believed himself strong enough to use Charles for his own purposes. His acceptance of the Chancellorship and of the Earldom of Shaftesbury, as well as his violent defence of the war on opening the Parliament, identified him yet more with the Royal policy. It was at this moment, if we credit a statement of doubtful authority in itself but which squares with the sudden change in his course, that he learnt from Arlington the secret of the Treaty of Dover. Whether this were so, or whether suspicion, as in the people at large, deepened into certainty, Shaftesbury saw he had been duped. To the bitterness of such a discovery was added the bitterness of having aided in schemes which he abhorred. His change of policy was rapid and complete. He suddenly pressed for the withdrawal of the Declaration of Indulgence. Alone among his fellow-ministers he supported the Test Act with extraordinary vehemence. His success in displacing James and Clifford, and in creating a barrier against any future Catholic projects, gave him hopes of revenging the deceit which had been practised on him by forcing his policy on the King. For the moment indeed Charles was helpless. He found himself, as he had told Lewis long before, alone in his realm. The Test Act had been passed unanimously by both Houses. Even the Nonconformists deserted him, and preferred persecution to the support of his plans. The dismissal of the Catholic officers made the employment of force, if he ever contemplated it, impossible, while the ill success of the Dutch war robbed him of all hope of aid from France. The firmness of the Prince of Orange had at last roused the stubborn energy of his countrymen. The French conquests on land were slowly won back, and at sea the fleet of the allies was still held in check by the fine seamanship of De Ruyter. Nor was William less successful in diplomacy than in war. The House of Austria was at last roused to action by the danger which threatened Europe, and its union with the United

Digitized by Google

Provinces laid the foundation of the Grand Alliance. Shaftesbury resolved to put an end to the war; and for this purpose he threw himself into hearty alliance with the Country party in the Commons, and welcomed the Duke of Ormond and Prince Rupert, who were looked upon as "great Parliament men," back to the Royal Council. It was to Shaftesbury's influence that Charles attributed the dislike which the Commons displayed to the war, and their refusal of a grant of supplies for it until fresh religious securities were devised. It was at his instigation that an address was presented by both Houses against the plan of marrying James to a Catholic princess, Mary of Modena. But the projects of Shaftesbury were suddenly interrupted by an unexpected act of vigour on the part of the King. The Houses were no sooner prorogued in November than the Chancellor was ordered to deliver up the Seals.

Nov. 1673.

**Charles and Shaftesbury.**

"It is only laying down my gown and buckling on my sword," Shaftesbury is said to have replied to the Royal bidding; and, though the words were innocent enough, for the sword was part of the usual dress of a gentleman which he must necessarily resume when he laid aside the gown of the Chancellor, they were taken as conveying a covert threat. He was still determined to force on the King a peace with the States. But he looked forward to the dangers of the future with even greater anxiety than to those of the present. The Duke of York, the successor to the throne, had owned himself a Catholic, and almost everyone agreed that securities for the national religion would be necessary in the case of his accession. But Shaftesbury saw, and it is his especial merit that he did see, that with a king like James, convinced of his Divine Right and bigoted in his religious fervour, securities were valueless. From the first he determined to force on Charles his brother's exclusion from the throne, and his resolve was justified by the Revolution which finally did the work he proposed to do. Unhappily he was equally determined to fight Charles with weapons as vile as his own. The result of Clifford's resignation, of James's acknowledgment of his conversion, had been to destroy all belief in the honesty of public men. A panic of distrust had begun. The fatal truth was whispered that Charles himself was a Catholic. In spite of the Test Act, it was suspected that men Catholics in heart still held high office in the State, and we know that in Arlington's case the suspicion was just. Shaftesbury seized on this public alarm, stirred above all by a sense of inability to meet the secret dangers which day after day was disclosing, as the means of carrying out his plans. He began fanning the panic by tales of a Papist rising in London, and of a coming Irish revolt with a French army to back it. He retired to his house in the City to find security against a conspiracy which had been formed, he said, to cut his throat. Meanwhile he rapidly organized the Country party in the Parliament, and placed himself openly at its head. An

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV. DANBY. 1673-1678.

1674.

address for the removal of ministers "popishly affected or otherwise obnoxious or dangerous" was presented on the reassembling of the Houses in 1674, and the refusal of supplies made a continuance of the war impossible. A bill was brought in to prevent all Catholics from approaching the Court, in other words for removing James from the King's Councils. A far more important bill was that of the Protestant Securities, which was pressed by Shaftesbury, Halifax, and Carlisle, the leaders of the new Opposition in the House of Lords, a bill which enacted that any prince of the blood should forfeit his right to the Crown on his marriage with a Catholic. The bill, which was the first sketch of the later Exclusion Bill, failed to pass, but its failure left the Houses excited and alarmed. Shaftesbury was busy intriguing in the City, corresponding with William of Orange, and pressing for a war with France which Charles could only avert by an appeal to Lewis, a subsidy from whom enabled him to prorogue the Parliament. But Charles saw that the time had come to give way. "Things have turned out ill," he said to Temple with a burst of unusual petulance, "but had I been well served I might have made a good business of it." His concessions however were as usual complete. He dismissed Buckingham and Arlington. He made peace with the Dutch. But Charles was never more formidable than in the moment of defeat, and he had already resolved on a new policy by which the efforts of Shaftesbury might be held at bay. Ever since the opening of his reign he had clung to a system of balance, had pitted Churchman against Nonconformist, and Ashley against Clarendon, partly to preserve his own independence, and partly with a view of winning some advantage to the Catholics from the political strife. The temper of the Commons had enabled Clarendon to baffle the King's attempts; and on his fall Charles felt strong enough to abandon the attempt to preserve a political balance, and had thrown himself on the support of Lewis and the Nonconformists in his new designs. But the new policy broke down like the old. The Nonconformists refused to betray the cause of Protestantism, and Shaftesbury, their leader, was pressing on measures which would rob Catholicism of the hopes it had gained from the conversion of James. In straits like these Charles resolved to win back the Commons by boldly adopting the policy on which the House was set. The majority of its members were still a mass of Cavalier Churchmen, who regarded Sir Thomas Osborne, a dependant of Arlington's, as their representative in the Royal Councils. The King had already created Osborne Earl of Danby, and raised him to the post of Lord Treasurer in Clifford's room. In 1674 he frankly adopted the policy of his party in the Parliament.

**Danby.**

The policy of Danby was simply that of Clarendon. He had all Clarendon's love of the Church, his equal hatred of Popery and Dissent, his high notions of the prerogative tempered by a faith in Parliament

Digitized by Google

and the law. The union between the Church and the Crown was ratified in a conference between Danby and the bishops at Lambeth; and its first fruits were seen in the rigorous enforcement of the law against conventicles, and the exclusion of all Catholics from Court. The Lady Mary, the eldest child of James, was confirmed by the King's orders as a Protestant, while the Parliament which was assembled in 1675 was assured that the Test Act should be rigorously enforced. The change in the Royal policy came not a moment too soon. As it was, the aid of the Cavalier party which rallied round Danby hardly saved the King from the humiliation of being forced to recall the troops he still maintained in the French service. To gain a majority on this point Danby was forced to avail himself of a resource which from this time played for nearly a hundred years an important part in English politics. He bribed lavishly. He was more successful in winning back the majority of the Commons from their alliance with the Country party by reviving the old spirit of religious persecution. He proposed that the test which had been imposed by Clarendon on municipal officers should be extended to all functionaries of the State; that every member of either House, every magistrate and public officer, should swear never to take arms against the King or to "endeavour any alteration of the Protestant religion now established by law in the Church of England, or any alteration in the Government in Church and State as it is by law established." The Bill was forced through the Lords by the bishops and the Cavalier party, and its passage through the Commons was only averted by a quarrel on privilege between the two Houses which Shaftesbury dexterously fanned into flame. On the other hand the Country party remained strong enough to refuse supplies. Eager as they were for the war with France which Danby promised, the Commons could not trust the King; and Danby was soon to discover how wise their distrust had been. For the Houses were no sooner prorogued than Charles revealed to him the negotiations he had been all the while carrying on with Lewis, and required him to sign a treaty by which, on consideration of a yearly pension guaranteed on the part of France, the two sovereigns bound themselves to enter into no engagements with other powers, and to lend each other aid in case of rebellion in their dominions. Such a treaty not only bound England to dependence on France, but freed the King from all Parliamentary control. But his minister pleaded in vain for delay and for the advice of the Council. Charles answered his entreaties by signing the treaty with his own hand. Danby found himself duped by the King as Shaftesbury had found himself duped; but his bold temper was only spurred to fresh plans for rescuing the King from his bondage to Lewis. To do this the first step was to reconcile the King and the Parliament, which met in 1676 after a prorogation of fifteen months. The Country party stood in the way of such a reconciliation, but Danby

1675.

1676

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.
DANBY.
1673-1678.

resolved to break its strength by measures of unscrupulous vigour, for which a blunder of Shaftesbury's gave an opportunity. Shaftesbury despaired of bringing the House of Commons, elected as it had been fifteen years before in a moment of religious and political reaction, to any steady opposition to the Crown. He had already moved an address for a dissolution; and he now urged that as a statute of Edward the Third ordained that Parliaments should be held "once a year or oftener if need be," the Parliament by the recent prorogation of a year and a half had ceased legally to exist. The Triennial Act deprived such an argument of any force. But Danby represented it as a contempt of the House, and the Lords at his bidding committed its supporters, Shaftesbury, Buckingham, Salisbury, and Wharton, to the Tower in 1677. While the Opposition cowered under the blow, Danby pushed on a measure which was designed to win back alarmed Churchmen to confidence in the Crown. By the bill for the Security of the Church it was provided that on the succession of a king not a member of the Established Church the appointment of bishops should be vested in the existing prelates, and that the King's children should be placed in the guardianship of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

1677.

**Treaty of Nimeguen.**

The bill however failed in the Commons; and a grant of supply was only obtained by Danby's profuse bribery. The progress of the war abroad, indeed, was rousing panic in England faster than Danby could allay it. The successes of the French arms in Flanders, and a defeat of the Prince of Orange at Cassel stirred the whole country to a cry for war. The House of Commons echoed the cry in an address to the Crown; but Charles parried the blow by demanding a supply before the war was declared, and on the refusal of the still suspicious House prorogued the Parliament. Fresh and larger subsidies from France enabled him to continue this prorogation for seven months. But the silence of the Parliament did little to silence the country; and Danby took advantage of the popular cry for war to press an energetic course of action on the King. In its will to check French aggression the Cavalier party was as earnest as the Puritan, and Danby aimed at redeeming his failure at home by uniting the Parliament through a vigorous policy abroad. As usual, Charles gave way. He was himself for the moment uneasy at the appearance of the French on the Flemish coast, and he owned that "he could never live at ease with his subjects" if Flanders were abandoned. He allowed Danby, therefore, to press on both parties the necessity for mutual concessions, and to define the new attitude of England by a step which was to produce results far more momentous than any of which either Charles or his minister dreamed. The Prince of Orange was suddenly invited to England, and wedded to Mary, the eldest child of the Duke of York. As the King was childless,

Digitized by Google

Sec. IV.

Danby. 1673-1678.

and James had no son, Mary was presumptive heiress of the Crown. The marriage therefore promised a close political union in the future with Holland, and a corresponding opposition to the ambition of France. With the country it was popular as a Protestant match, and as ensuring a Protestant successor to James. Lewis was bitterly angered; he rejected the English propositions of peace, and again set his army in the field. Danby was ready to accept the challenge, and the withdrawal of the English ambassador from Paris was followed in 1678 by an assembly of the Parliament. A warlike speech from the throne was answered by a warlike address from the House, supplies were voted, and an army raised. But the actual declaration of war still failed to appear. While Danby threatened war, Charles was busy turning the threat to his own profit, and gaining time by prorogations for a series of base negotiations. At one stage he demanded from Lewis a fresh pension for the next three years as the price of his good offices with the allies. Danby stooped to write the demand, and Charles added, "This letter is written by my order, C.R." A force of three thousand English soldiers were landed at Ostend; but the allies were already broken by their suspicions of the King's real policy, and Charles soon agreed for a fresh pension to recall the brigade. The bargain was hardly struck when Lewis withdrew the terms of peace he had himself offered, and on the faith of which England had ostensibly retired from the scene. Danby at once offered fresh aid to the allies, but all faith in England was lost. One power after another gave way to the new French demands, and the virtual victory of Lewis was secured in July, 1678, by the Peace of Nimeguen.

1678.

The Popish Plot.

The Treaty of Nimeguen not only left France the arbiter of Europe, but it left Charles the master of a force of twenty thousand men levied for the war he refused to declare, and with nearly a million of French money in his pocket. His course had roused into fresh life the old suspicions of his perfidy, and of a secret plot with Lewis for the ruin of English freedom and of English religion. That there was such a plot we know; and the hopes of the Catholic party mounted as fast as the panic of the Protestants. Coleman, the secretary of the Duchess of York, and a busy intriguer, had gained sufficient knowledge of the real plans of the King and of his brother to induce him to beg for money from Lewis in the work of furthering them by intrigues in the Parliament. A passage from his letter gives us a glimpse of the wild hopes which were stirring among the hotter Catholics of the time. "They had a mighty work on their hands," he wrote, "no less than the conversion of three kingdoms, and by that perhaps the utter subduing of a pestilent heresy which had so long domineered over a great part of the northern world. Success would give the greatest blow to the Protestant religion that it had received since its birth." The letter was secret; but the hopes of the Catholics were known, and the alarm grew fast. Mean-

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.
DANBY.
1673-1678.

while one of the vile impostors who are always thrown to the surface at times of great public agitation was ready to take advantage of the general alarm by the invention of a Popish plot. Titus Oates, a Baptist minister before the Restoration, a curate and navy chaplain after it, but left penniless by his infamous character, had sought bread in a conversion to Catholicism, and had been received into Jesuit houses at Valladolid and St. Omer. While he remained there, he learnt the fact of a secret meeting of the Jesuits in London, which was probably nothing but the usual congregation of the order. On his expulsion for misconduct this single fact widened in his fertile brain into a plot for the subversion of Protestantism and the death of the King. His story was laid before Charles, and received with cool incredulity; but Oates made affidavit of its truth before a London magistrate, Sir Edmondsbury Godfrey, and at last managed to appear before the Council. He declared that he had been trusted with letters which disclosed the Jesuit plans. They were stirring rebellion in Ireland; in Scotland they disguised themselves as Cameronians; in England their aim was to assassinate the King, and to leave the throne open to the Papist Duke of York. But no letters appeared to support these monstrous charges, and Oates would have been dismissed with contempt but for the seizure of Coleman's correspondence. His letters gave a new colour to the plot. Danby himself, conscious of the truth that there were designs which Charles dared not avow, was shaken in his rejection of the disclosures, and inclined to use them as weapons to check the King in his Catholic policy. But a more unscrupulous hand had already seized on the growing panic. Shaftesbury, released after a long imprisonment and desperate of other courses, threw himself into the plot. "Let the Treasurer cry as loud as he pleases against Popery," he laughed, "I will cry a note louder." But no cry was needed to heighten the popular frenzy from the moment when Sir Edmondsbury Godfrey, a magistrate before whom Oates had laid his information, was found in a field near London with his sword run through his heart. His death was assumed to be murder, and the murder to be an attempt of the Jesuits to "stifle the plot." A solemn funeral added to public agitation; and the two Houses named committees to investigate the charges made by Oates.

**The fall of Danby.**

In this investigation Shaftesbury took the lead. Whatever his personal ambition may have been, his public aims in all that followed were wise and far-sighted. He aimed at forcing Charles to dissolve the Parliament and appeal again to the nation. He aimed at forcing on Charles a ministry which should break his dependence on France and give a constitutional turn to his policy. He saw that no guaranty would really avail to meet the danger of a Catholic sovereign, and he aimed at excluding James from the throne. But in pursuing these aims he rested wholly on the plot. He fanned the popular panic by accept-

Digitized by Google

ing without question some fresh depositions in which Oates charged five Catholic peers with part in the Jesuit conspiracy. The peers were sent to the Tower, and two thousand suspected persons were hurried to prison. A proclamation ordered every Catholic to leave London. The trainbands were called to arms, and patrols paraded through the streets, to guard against the Catholic rising which Oates declared to be at hand. Meanwhile Shaftesbury turned the panic to political account by forcing through Parliament against the fierce opposition of the Court party a bill which excluded Catholics from a seat in either House. The exclusion remained in force for a century and a half; but it had really been aimed against the Duke of York, and Shaftesbury was defeated by a proviso which exempted James from the operation of the bill. The plot too which had been supported for four months by the sole evidence of Oates, began to hang fire; but a promise of reward brought forward a villain, named Bedloe, with tales beside which those of Oates seemed tame. The two informers were now pressed forward by an infamous rivalry to stranger and stranger revelations. Bedloe swore to the existence of a plot for the landing of a Papist army and a general massacre of the Protestants. Oates capped the revelations of Bedloe by charging the Queen herself, at the bar of the Lords, with knowledge of the plot to murder her husband. Monstrous as such charges were, they revived the waning frenzy of the people and of the two Houses. The peers under arrest were ordered to be impeached. A new proclamation enjoined the arrest of every Catholic in the realm. A series of judicial murders began with the trial and execution of Coleman, which even now can only be remembered with horror. But the alarm must soon have worn out had it only been supported by perjury. What gave force to the false plot was the existence of a true one. Coleman's letters had won credit for the perjuries of Oates, and a fresh discovery now won credit for the perjuries of Bedloe. The English ambassador at Paris, Edward Montagu, returned home on a quarrel with Danby, obtained a seat in the House of Commons, and in spite of the seizure of his papers laid on the table of the House the despatch which had been forwarded to Lewis, demanding payment of the King's services to France during the late negotiations. The House was thunderstruck; for, strong as had been the general suspicion, the fact of the dependence of England on a foreign power had never before been proved. Danby's name was signed to the despatch, and he was at once impeached on a charge of high treason. But Shaftesbury was more eager to secure the election of a new Parliament than to punish his rival, and Charles was resolved to prevent at any price a trial which could not fail to reveal the disgraceful secret of his foreign policy. Charles was in fact at Shaftesbury's mercy, and the bargain for which Shaftesbury had been playing had

Digitized by Google

SEC. V
SHAFTESBURY.
1679–1682.

to be struck. The Earl agreed that the impeachment should be dropped, and the King promised that a new Parliament should be summoned, and a new ministry called into office.

## Section V.—Shaftesbury. 1679–1682.

[*Authorities.*—As before. We may add for this period Earl Russell's Life of his ancestor, William, Lord Russell.]

---

**Sir William Temple.**

When the Parliament met in March, 1679, the King's pledge was redeemed by the dismissal of Danby from his post of Treasurer, and the constitution of a new ministry. Shaftesbury, as its most important member, became President of the Council. The chiefs of the Country party, Lord Russell and Lord Cavendish, took their seats at the board with Lords Holles and Roberts, the older representatives of the Presbyterian party which had merged in the general Opposition. Savile, Lord Halifax, as yet known only as a keen and ingenious speaker, entered the ministry in the train of his own connection, Lord Shaftesbury, while Lord Essex and Lord Capel, two of the most popular among the Country leaders, went to the Treasury. The recall of Sir William Temple, the negotiator of the Triple Alliance, from his embassy at the Hague to fill the post of Secretary of State, promised a foreign policy which would again place England high among the European powers. Temple returned with a plan of administration which, fruitless as it directly proved, is of great importance as marking the silent change which was passing over the Constitution. Like many men of his time, he was equally alarmed at the power both of the Crown and of the Parliament. In moments of national excitement the power of the Houses seemed irresistible. They had overthrown Clarendon. They had overthrown Clifford and the Cabal. They had just overthrown Danby. But though they were strong enough in the end to punish ill government, they showed no power of securing good government or of permanently influencing the policy of the Crown. For nineteen years, in fact, with a Parliament always sitting, Charles had had it all his own way. He had made war against the will of the nation, and he had refused to make war when the nation demanded it. While every Englishman hated France, he had made England a mere dependency of the French King. The remedy for this state of things, as it was afterwards found, was a very simple one. By a change which we shall have to trace, the Ministry has now become a Committee of State-officers, named by the majority of the House of Commons from amongst the more prominent of its representatives in either House, whose object in accepting office is to do the will of that majority. So long as the majority of the House of

Digitized by Google

Commons itself represents the more powerful current of public opinion it is clear that such an arrangement makes government an accurate reflection of the national will. But obvious as such a plan may seem to us, it had as yet occurred to no English statesman. Even to Temple the one remedy seemed to lie in the restoration of the Royal Council to its older powers. This body, composed as it was of the great officers of the Court, the Royal Treasurer and Secretaries, and a few nobles specially summoned to it by the sovereign, formed up to the close of Elizabeth's reign a sort of deliberative assembly to which the graver matters of public administration were commonly submitted by the Crown. A practice, however, of previously submitting such measures to a smaller body of the more important councillors must always have existed; and under James this secret committee, which was then known as the Cabala or Cabal, began almost wholly to supersede the Council itself. In the large and balanced Council which was formed after the Restoration all real power rested with the "Cabala" of Clarendon, Southampton, Ormond, Monk, and the two Secretaries; and on Clarendon's fall these were succeeded by Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley, and Lauderdale. By a mere coincidence the initials of the latter names formed the word "Cabal," which has ever since retained the sinister meaning their unpopularity gave to it. The effect of these smaller committees had undoubtedly been to remove the check which the larger numbers and the more popular composition of the Royal Council laid upon the Crown. The unscrupulous projects which made the Cabal of Clifford and his fellows a by-word among Englishmen could never have been laid before a Council of great peers and hereditary officers of State. To Temple therefore the organization of the Council seemed to furnish a check on mere personal government which Parliament was unable to supply. For this purpose the Cabala, or Cabinet, as it was now becoming the fashion to term the confidential committee of the Council, was abolished. The Council itself was restricted to thirty members, and their joint income was not to fall below £300,000, a sum little less than what was estimated as the income of the whole House of Commons. A body of great nobles and proprietors, not too numerous for secret deliberation, and wealthy enough to counterbalance either the Commons or the Crown, would form, Temple hoped, a barrier against the violence and aggression of the one power, and a check on the mere despotism of the other.

**The Exclusion.**

The new Council and the new ministry gave fair hope of a wise and patriotic government. But the difficulties were still great. The nation was frenzied with suspicion and panic. The elections to the new Parliament had taken place amidst a whirl of excitement which left no place for candidates of the Court; and so unmanageable was the temper of the Commons that Shaftesbury was unable to carry out his

Digitized by Google

SEC. V.
SHAFTESBURY.
1679-1682.

part of the bargain with Charles. The Commons insisted on carrying the impeachment of Danby to the bar of the Lords. The appointment of the new ministry, indeed, was welcomed with a burst of general joy; but the disbanding of the army and the withdrawal of the Duke of York to Holland at the King's command failed to restore public confidence. At the bottom of the panic lay the dread of a Catholic successor to the throne, a dread which the after history of James fully justified. Shaftesbury was earnest for the exclusion of James, but as yet the majority of the Council shrank from the step, and supported a plan which Charles brought forward for restraining the powers of his successor. By this project the presentation to Church livings was to be taken out of the new monarch's hands. The last Parliament of the preceding reign was to continue to sit; and the appointment of all Councillors, Judges, Lord-Lieutenants, and officers in the fleet, was vested in the two Houses so long as a Catholic sovereign was on the throne. The extent of these provisions showed the pressure which Charles felt, but Shaftesbury was undoubtedly right in setting the plan aside as at once insufficient and impracticable. He continued to advocate the Exclusion in the Royal Council; and a bill for depriving James of his right to the Crown, and for devolving it on the next Protestant in the line of succession was introduced into the Commons by his adherents and passed the House by a large majority. It was known that Charles would use his influence with the Peers for its rejection. The Earl therefore fell back on the tactics of Pym. A bold Remonstrance was prepared in the Commons. The City of London was ready with an address to the two Houses in favour of the bill. All Charles could do was to gain time by the prorogation of the Parliament for a few months.

Monmouth.

But delay would have been useless had the Country party remained at one. The temper of the nation and of the House of Commons was so hotly pronounced in favour of the Exclusion of the Duke that union among the patriot ministers must in the end have secured it and spared England the necessity for the Revolution of 1688. The wiser leaders among them, indeed, were already leaning to the very change which that Revolution brought about. If James were passed over, his daughter Mary, the wife of the Prince of Orange, stood next in the order of succession; and the plan of Temple, Essex, and Halifax was to bring the Prince over to England during the prorogation, to introduce him into the Council, and to pave his way to the throne. Unhappily Shaftesbury was contemplating a very different course. For reasons which still remain obscure, he distrusted the Prince of Orange. His desire for a more radical change may have been prompted by the maxin ascribed to him that "a bad title makes a good king." But whatever were his motives, he had resolved to set aside the claim of both James and his children, and to

Digitized by Google

place the Duke of Monmouth on the throne. Monmouth was the eldest of the King's bastards, a weak and worthless profligate in temper, but popular through his personal beauty and his reputation for bravery. He had just returned in triumph from suppressing a revolt which had broken out among the Scotch Covenanters in the western shires; and the tale was at once set about of a secret marriage between the King and his mother which would have made him lawful heir to the throne. Shaftesbury almost openly espoused his cause. He pressed the King to give him the command of the Guards, which would have put the only military force in Monmouth's hands. Left all alone in this course by the opposition of his colleagues, the Earl threw himself more and more on the support of the Plot. The prosecution of its victims was pushed recklessly on. Three Catholics were hanged in London. Eight priests were put to death in the country. Pursuivants and informers spread terror through every Popish household. Shaftesbury counted on the reassembling of the Parliament to bring all this terror to bear upon the King. But Charles had already seized on the breach which the Earl's policy had made in the ranks of the Country party. He saw that Shaftesbury was unsupported by any of his colleagues save Russell. To Temple, Essex, or Halifax it seemed possible to bring about the succession of Mary without any violent revolution; but to set aside, not only the right of James, but the right of his Protestant children, was to ensure a civil war. The influence, however, of Shaftesbury over the Commons promised a speedy recognition of Monmouth, and Temple could only meet this by advising Charles to dissolve the Parliament.

**Shaftesbury's Dismissal.**

Shaftesbury's anger vented itself in threats that the advisers of this dissolution should pay for it with their heads. The danger was brought home to them by a sudden illness of the King; and the prospect of ruin if Monmouth should succeed in his design drew the moderate party in the Council, whether they would or no, to the Duke of York. It was the alarm which Essex and Halifax felt at the threats of Shaftesbury which made them advise the recall of James on the King's illness; and though the Duke again withdrew to Edinburgh on his brother's recovery, the same ministers encouraged Charles to send Monmouth out of the country and to dismiss Shaftesbury himself from the Council. The dismissal was the signal for a struggle to whose danger Charles was far from blinding himself. What had saved him till now was his cynical courage. In the midst of the terror and panic of the Plot men "wondered to see him quite cheerful amidst such an intricacy of troubles," says the courtly Reresby, "but it was not in his nature to think or perplex himself much about anything." Even in the heat of the tumult which followed on Shaftesbury's dismissal, Charles was seen fishing and sauntering as usual in Windsor Park. But closer observers than Reresby saw beneath this veil of indolent



Digitized by Google

SEC. V.
SHAFTESBURY.
1679-1682.

unconcern a consciousness of new danger. "From this time," says Burnet, "his temper was observed to change very visibly." He became in fact "sullen and thoughtful; he saw that he had to do with a strange sort of people, that could neither be managed nor frightened." But he faced the danger with his old unscrupulous coolness. He reopened secret negotiations with France. Lewis was as alarmed as Charles himself at the warlike temper of the nation, and as anxious to prevent the assembly of a Parliament; but the terms on which he offered a subsidy were too humiliating even for the King's acceptance. The failure forced him to summon a new Parliament; and the terror, which Shaftesbury was busily feeding with new tales of massacre and invasion, returned members even more violent than the members of the House he had just dismissed. Even the Council shrank from the King's proposal to prorogue this Parliament at its first meeting in 1680, but Charles persisted. Alone as he stood, he was firm in his resolve to gain time, for Time, as he saw, was working in his favour. The tide of public sympathy was beginning to turn. The perjury of Oates proved too much at last for the credulity of juries; and the acquittal of four of his victims was a sign that the panic was beginning to ebb. A far stronger proof of this was seen in the immense efforts which Shaftesbury made to maintain it. Fresh informers were brought forward to swear to a plot for the assassination of the Earl himself, and to the share of the Duke of York in the conspiracies of his fellow Papists. A paper found in a meal-tub was produced as evidence of the new danger. Gigantic torch-light processions paraded the streets of London, and the effigy of the Pope was burnt amidst the wild outcry of a vast multitude.

**Petitioners and Abhorrers.**

Acts of yet greater daring showed the lengths to which Shaftesbury was now ready to go. He had grown up amidst the tumults of civil war, and, greyheaded as he was, the fire and vehemence of his early days seemed to wake again in the singular recklessness with which he drove on the nation to a new struggle in arms. In 1680 he formed a committee for promoting agitation throughout the country; and the petitions which it drew up for the assembly of the Parliament were sent to every town and grand jury, and sent back again with thousands of signatures. Monmouth, in spite of the King's orders, returned at Shaftesbury's call to London; and a daring pamphlet pointed him out as the nation's leader in the coming struggle against Popery and tyranny. So great was the alarm of the Council that the garrison in every fortress was held in readiness for instant war. But the danger was really over. The tide of opinion had fairly turned. Acquittal followed acquittal. A reaction of horror and remorse at the cruelty which had hurried victim after victim to the gallows succeeded to the pitiless frenzy which Shaftesbury had fanned into a flame. Anxious as the nation was for a Protestant sovereign, its sense of justice revolted

Digitized by Google

against the wrong threatened to James' Protestant children; and every gentleman in the realm felt insulted at the project of setting Mary aside to put the crown of England on the head of a Royal bastard. The memory too of the Civil War was still fresh and keen, and the rumour of an outbreak of revolt rallied every loyalist round the King. The host of petitions which Shaftesbury procured from the counties was answered by a counter host of addresses from thousands who declared their "abhorrence" of the plans against the Crown. The country was divided into two great factions of "petitioners" and "abhorrers," the germs of the two great parties of "Whigs" and "Tories" which have played so prominent a part in our political history from the time of the Exclusion Bill. Charles at once took advantage of this turn of affairs. He recalled the Duke of York to the Court. He received the resignations of Russell and Cavendish, who alone in the Council still supported Shaftesbury's projects, "with all his heart." Shaftesbury met defiance with defiance. Followed by a crowd of his adherents he attended before the Grand Jury of Middlesex, to present the Duke of York as a Catholic recusant, and the King's mistress, the Duchess of Portsmouth, as a national nuisance, while Monmouth returned to make a progress through the country, and won favour everywhere by his winning demeanour. Above all, Shaftesbury relied on the temper of the Commons, elected as they had been in the very heat of the panic and irritated by the long prorogation; and the first act of the House on meeting in October was to vote that their care should be "to suppress Popery and prevent a Popish successor." Rumours of a Catholic plot in Ireland were hardly needed to push the Exclusion Bill through the Commons without a division; and even the Council wavered before the resolute temper of their opponents. Temple and Essex both declared themselves in favour of the Exclusion. Of all the leaders of the Country party, only Lord Halifax now remained opposed to it, and his opposition simply aimed at securing its object by less violent means. "My Lord Halifax is entirely in the interest of the Prince of Orange," the French ambassador, Barillon, wrote to his master, "and what he seems to be doing for the Duke of York is really in order to make an opening for a compromise by which the Prince of Orange may benefit." But Charles eagerly seized on this fatal disunion in the only party which could effectively check his designs. He dismissed Essex and Temple and backed by his personal influence the eloquence of Halifax in bringing about the rejection of the Exclusion Bill in the Lords. The same fate awaited Shaftesbury's despairing efforts to pass a Bill of Divorce, which would have enabled Charles to put away his queen on the ground of barrenness, and by a fresh marriage to give a Protestant heir to the throne.

*Oct.* 1680.

Bold as the King's action had been, it rested for support simply on



Digitized by Google

SEC. V.

SHAFTESBURY.

1679-1682.

The Oxford Parliament.

the change in public feeling, and this Shaftesbury resolved to check and turn by a great public impeachment which would revive and establish the general belief in the Plot. Lord Stafford, who from his age and rank was looked on as the leader of the Catholic party, had lain a prisoner in the Tower since the first outburst of popular frenzy. He was now solemnly impeached; and his trial in December 1680 mustered the whole force of informers to prove the truth of a Catholic conspiracy against the King and the realm. The evidence was worthless; but the trial revived, as Shaftesbury had hoped, much of the old panic, and the condemnation of the prisoner by a majority of his peers was followed by his death on the scaffold. The blow produced its effect on all but Charles. Even Lord Sunderland, the ablest of the new ministers who had succeeded Temple and his friends, pressed the King to give way. Halifax, while still firm against the Exclusion Bill, took advantage of the popular pressure to introduce a measure which would with less show of violence have as completely accomplished the ends of an exclusion as the bill itself, a measure which would have taken from James on his accession the right of veto on any bill passed by the two Houses, the right of negotiating with foreign states, or of appointing either civil or military officers save with the consent of Parliament. The plan was no doubt prompted by the Prince of Orange; and the States of Holland supported it by pressing Charles to come to an accommodation with his subjects which would enable them to check the perpetual aggressions which France had been making on her neighbours since the Peace of Nimeguen. But deserted as he was by his ministers, and even by his mistress, for the Duchess of Portsmouth had been cowed into supporting the exclusion by the threats of Shaftesbury, Charles was determined to resist every project whether of exclusion or limitation. On a refusal of supplies he dissolved the Parliament. The truth was that he had at last succeeded in procuring the aid of France. Without the knowledge of his ministers he had renewed his secret negotiations, had pledged himself to withdraw from alliance with all the opponents of French policy, and in return had been promised a subsidy which recruited his Treasury and again rendered him independent of Parliaments. With characteristic subtilty however he summoned, in March 1681, a new Parliament. The summons was a mere blind. The King's one aim was to frighten the country into reaction by the dread of civil strife; and his summons of the Parliament to Oxford was an appeal to the country against the disloyalty of the capital, and an adroit means of reviving the memories of the Civil War. With the same end he ordered his guards to accompany him, on the pretext of anticipated disorder; and Shaftesbury, himself terrified at the projects of the Court, aided the King's designs by appearing with his followers in arms on the plea of self-protection. The violence of the Parliament played yet more effectually into the

Digitized by Google

King's hands. Its members were the same as those who had been returned to the Parliament he had just dissolved, and their temper was more vehement than ever. Their rejection of a new Limitation Bill brought forward by Halifax, which while conceding to James the title of King would have vested the actual functions of government in the Prince of Orange, alienated the more moderate and sensible of the Country party. Their attempt to revive the panic by impeaching an informer, FitzHarris, before the House of Lords in defiance of the constitutional rule which entitled him as a commoner to a trial by his peers in the course of common law, did still more to throw public opinion on the side of the Crown. Shaftesbury's course rested wholly on the belief that the penury of the Treasury left Charles at his mercy, and that a refusal of supplies must wring from the King his assent to the exclusion. But the gold of France had freed the King from his thraldom. He had used the Parliament simply to exhibit himself as a sovereign whose patience and conciliatory temper was rewarded with insult and violence; and now that he saw his end accomplished, he suddenly dissolved the Houses in April, and appealed in a Royal declaration to the justice of the nation at large.

**Shaftesbury's Death.**

The appeal was met by an almost universal burst of loyalty. The Church rallied to the King; his declaration was read from every pulpit; and the Universities solemnly decided that "no religion, no law, no fault, no forfeiture," could avail to bar the sacred right of hereditary succession. The arrest of Shaftesbury on a charge of suborning false witnesses to the Plot marked the new strength of the Crown. London indeed was still true to him; the Middlesex Grand Jury ignored the bill of his indictment; and his discharge from the Tower was welcomed in every street with bonfires and ringing of bells. But a fresh impulse was given to the loyal enthusiasm of the country at large by the publication of a plan found among his papers, the plan of a secret association for the furtherance of the exclusion, whose members bound themselves to obey the orders of Parliament even after its prorogation or dissolution by the Crown. Charles pushed boldly on in his new course. He confirmed the loyalty of the Church by renewing the persecution of the Nonconformists. The Duke of York returned in triumph to St. James's, and the turn of the tide was so manifest that Lord Sunderland and the ministers, who had wavered till now, openly sought the Duke's favour. Monmouth, who had resumed his progresses through the country as a means of checking the tide of reaction, was at once arrested. A daring breach of custom placed Tories in 1682 as sheriffs of the City of London, and the packed juries they nominated left the life of every exclusionist at the mercy of the Crown. Shaftesbury, alive to the new danger, plunged desperately into conspiracies with a handful of adventurers as desperate as himself, hid himself in the City, where he boasted that ten thousand "brisk boys"

1682.

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE SECOND STUART TYRANNY. 1682-1688.

were ready to appear at his call, and urged his friends to rise in arms. But their delays drove him to flight; and in January 1683, two months after his arrival in Holland, the soul of the great leader, great from his immense energy and the wonderful versatility of his genius, but whose genius and energy had ended in wrecking for the time the fortunes of English freedom and in associating the noblest of causes with the vilest of crimes, found its first quiet in death.

### Section VI.—The Second Stuart Tyranny, 1682–1688.

[*Authorities.*—To those for the previous sections we may add Welwood's "Memoirs," Luttrell's "Diary," and above all Lord Macaulay's "History of England," during this period.]

**The Royal Triumph.**

The flight of Shaftesbury proclaimed the triumph of the King. His wonderful sagacity had told him when the struggle was over and further resistance useless. But the Whig leaders, who had delayed to answer the Earl's call, still nursed projects of rising in arms; and the more desperate spirits who had clustered round him as he lay hidden in the City took refuge in plots of assassination and in a plan for murdering Charles and his brother as they passed the Rye-house on their road from London to Newmarket. Both the conspiracies were betrayed, and though they were wholly distinct from one another the cruel ingenuity of the Crown lawyers blended them into one. Lord Essex, the last of an ill-fated race, saved himself from a traitor's death by suicide in the Tower. Lord Russell, convicted on a charge of sharing
1683. in the Rye-house plot, was beheaded in Lincoln Inn Fields. The same fate awaited Algernon Sidney. Monmouth fled in terror over sea, and his flight was followed by a series of prosecutions for sedition directed against his followers. In 1683 the Constitutional opposition which had held Charles so long in check lay crushed at his feet. A weaker man might easily have been led into a wild tyranny by the mad outburst of loyalty which greeted his triumph. On the very day when the crowd around Russell's scaffold were dipping their handkerchiefs in his blood, as in the blood of a martyr, the University of Oxford solemnly declared that the doctrine of passive obedience, even to the worst of rulers, was a part of religion. But Charles saw that immense obstacles still lay in the road of a mere tyranny. The Church was as powerful as ever, and the mention of a renewal of the Indulgence to Nonconformists had to be withdrawn before the opposition of the bishops. He was careful therefore during the few years which remained to him to avoid the appearance of any open violation of public law. He suspended no statute. He imposed no tax by Royal authority. He generally enforced the Test Act. Nothing indeed shows more completely how great a work the Long Parliament

Digitized by Google

had done than a survey of the reign of Charles the Second. "The King," Hallam says very truly, "was restored to nothing but what the law had preserved to him." No attempt was made to restore the abuses which the patriots of 1641 had swept away. Parliament was continually summoned. In spite of its frequent refusal of supplies, no attempt was ever made to raise money by unconstitutional means. The few illegal proclamations issued under Clarendon ceased with his fall. No effort was made to revive the Star Chamber and the Court of High Commission; and if judges were servile and juries sometimes packed, there was no open interference with the course of justice. In two remarkable points freedom had made an advance even on 1641. From the moment when printing began to tell on public opinion, it had been gagged by a system of licences. The regulations framed under Henry the Eighth subjected the press to the control of the Star Chamber, and the Martin Marprelate libels brought about a yet more stringent control under Elizabeth. Even the Long Parliament laid a heavy hand on the press, and the great remonstrance of Milton in his "Areopagitica" fell dead on the ears of his Puritan associates. But the statute for the regulation of printing which was passed immediately after the Restoration expired finally in 1679, and the temper of the Parliament gave no hope of any successful attempt to re-establish the censorship. To the freedom of the press the Habeas Corpus Act added a new security for the personal freedom of every Englishman. Against arbitrary imprisonment provision had been made in the earliest ages by a famous clause in the Great Charter. No free man could be held in prison save on charge or conviction of crime or for debt; and every prisoner on a criminal charge could demand as a right from the court of King's Bench the issue of a writ of "habeas corpus," which bound his gaoler to produce both the prisoner and the warrant on which he was imprisoned, that the court might judge whether he was imprisoned according to law. In cases however of imprisonment on a warrant of the Royal Council it had been sometimes held by judges that the writ could not be issued, and under Clarendon's administration instances had in this way occurred of imprisonment without legal remedy. But his fall was quickly followed by the introduction of a bill to secure this right of the subject, and after a long struggle the Act which is known as the Habeas Corpus Act passed finally in 1679. By this great statute the old practice of the law was freed from all difficulties and exceptions. Every prisoner committed for any crime save treason or felony was declared entitled to his writ even in the vacations of the courts, and heavy penalties were enforced on judges or gaolers who refused him this right. Every person committed for felony or treason was entitled to be released on bail, unless indicted at the next session of gaol delivery after his commitment, and to be discharged if not indicted at the

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE SECOND STUART TYRANNY. 1682-1688.

sessions which followed. It was forbidden under the heaviest penalties to send a prisoner into any places or fortresses beyond the seas.

Galling to the Crown as the freedom of the press and the Habeas Corpus Act were soon found to be, Charles made no attempt to curtail the one or to infringe the other. But while cautious to avoid rousing popular resistance, he moved coolly and resolutely forward on the path of despotism. It was in vain that Halifax pressed for energetic resistance to the aggressions of France, for the recall of Monmouth, or for the calling of a fresh Parliament. Like every other English statesman he found he had been duped, and that now his work was done he was suffered to remain in office but left without any influence in the government. In spite of his remonstrances the Test Act was violated by the readmission of James to a seat in the Council, and by his restoration to the office of Lord High Admiral. Parliament, in defiance of the Triennial Act, remained unassembled during the remainder of the King's reign. His secret alliance with France furnished Charles with the funds he immediately required, and the rapid growth of the customs through the increase of English commerce promised to give him a revenue which, if peace were preserved, would save him from the need of a fresh appeal to the Commons. All opposition was at an end. The strength of the Country party had been broken by the reaction against Shaftesbury's projects, and by the flight and death of its more prominent leaders. Whatever strength it retained lay chiefly in the towns, and these were now attacked by writs of "quo warranto," which called on them to show cause why their charters should not be declared forfeited on the ground of abuse of their privileges. A few verdicts on the side of the Crown brought about a general surrender of municipal liberties; and the grant of fresh charters, in which all but ultra-loyalists were carefully excluded from their corporations, placed the representation of the boroughs in the hands of the Crown. Against active discontent Charles had long been quietly providing by the gradual increase of his Guards. The withdrawal of its garrison from Tangier enabled him to raise their force to nine thousand well-equipped soldiers, and to supplement this force, the nucleus of our present standing army, by a reserve of six regiments, which were maintained, till they should be needed at home, in the service of the United Provinces. But great as the danger really was, it lay not so much in isolated acts of tyranny as in the character and purpose of Charles himself. His death at the very moment of his triumph saved English freedom. He had regained his old popularity, and at the news of his danger in the spring of 1685 crowds thronged the churches, praying that God would raise him up again to be a father to his people. The bishops around his bed fell on their knees and implored his blessing, and Charles with outstretched hands solemnly gave it to them. But while his subjects were praying,

**Death of Charles.**

Digitized by Google

and his bishops seeking a blessing, the one anxiety of the King was to die reconciled to the Catholic Church. When his chamber was cleared a priest named Huddleston, who had saved his life after the battle of Worcester, received his confession and administered the last sacraments. Charles died as he had lived: brave, witty, cynical, even in the presence of death. Tortured as he was with pain, he begged the bystanders to forgive him for being so unconscionable a time in dying. One mistress, the Duchess of Portsmouth, hung weeping over his bed. His last thought was of another mistress, Nell Gwynn. "Do not," he whispered to his successor ere he sank into a fatal stupor, "do not let poor Nelly starve!"

**James the Second.**

The first words of James on his accession in February 1685 were a pledge to preserve the laws inviolate, and to protect the Church. The pledge was welcomed by the whole country with enthusiasm. All the suspicions of a Catholic sovereign seemed to have disappeared. "We have the word of a King!" ran the general cry, "and of a King who was never worse than his word." The conviction of his brother's faithlessness stood James in good stead. He was looked upon as narrow, impetuous, stubborn, and despotic in heart, but even his enemies did not accuse him of being false. Above all he was believed to be keenly alive to the honour of his country, and resolute to free it from foreign dependence. It was necessary to summon a Parliament, for the Royal revenue ceased with the death of the King; but the elections, swayed at once by the tide of loyalty and by the command of the boroughs which the surrender of their charters had given to the Crown, sent up a House of Commons in which James failed to find a man who was not to his mind. The question of religious security was waived at a hint of the Royal displeasure. A revenue of nearly two millions was granted to the King for life. All that was wanted to rouse the loyalty of the country into fanaticism was supplied by a rebellion in the north, and by another under Monmouth in the west. The hopes of Scotch freedom had clung ever since the Restoration to the house of Argyle. The great Marquis, as we have seen, had been brought to the block at the Restoration. His son, the Earl of Argyle, had been unable to save himself even by a life of singular caution and obedience from the ill-will of the vile politicians who governed Scotland. He was at last convicted of treason on grounds at which every English statesman stood aghast. "We should not hang a dog here," Halifax protested, "on the grounds on which my lord Argyle has been sentenced to death." The Earl escaped however to Holland, and lived peaceably there during the six last years of the reign of Charles. Monmouth found the same refuge at the Hague, where a belief in his father's love and purpose to recall him secured him a kindly reception from William of Orange. But the accession of James was a death-blow to the hopes of the Duke, while

Digitized by Google

it stirred the fanaticism of Argyle to a resolve of wresting Scotland from the rule of a Popish king. The two leaders determined to appear in arms in England and the North, and the two expeditions sailed within a few days of each other. Argyle's attempt was soon over. His clan of the Campbells rose on his landing in Cantyre, but the country had been occupied for the King, and quarrels among the exiles who accompanied him robbed his effort of every chance of success. His force scattered without a fight; and Argyle, arrested in an attempt to escape, was hurried to a traitor's death. Monmouth for a time found brighter fortune. His popularity in the west was great, and though the gentry held aloof when he landed at Lyme, the farmers and traders of Devonshire and Dorset flocked to his standard. The clothier-towns of Somerset were still true to the Whig cause, and on the entrance of the Duke into Taunton the popular enthusiasm showed itself in flowers which wreathed every door, as well as in a train of young girls who presented Monmouth with a Bible and a flag. His forces now amounted to six thousand men, but whatever chance of success he might have had was lost by his assumption of the title of King. The gentry, still true to the cause of Mary and of William, held stubbornly aloof, while the Guards hurried to the scene of the revolt, and the militia gathered to the Royal standard. Foiled in an attempt on Bristol and Bath, Monmouth fell back on Bridgewater, and flung himself in the night of the sixth of July, 1685, on the King's forces, which lay encamped on Sedgemoor. The surprise failed; and the brave peasants and miners who followed the Duke, checked in their advance by a deep drain which crossed the moor, were broken after a short resistance by the Royal horse. Their leader fled from the field, and after a vain effort to escape from the realm, was captured and sent pitilessly to the block.

**The Bloody Assize.**

Never had England shown a firmer loyalty; but its loyalty was changed into horror by the terrible measures of repression which followed on the victory of Sedgemoor. Even North, the Lord Keeper, a servile tool of the Crown, protested against the license and bloodshed in which the troops were suffered to indulge after the battle. His protest however was disregarded, and he withdrew broken-hearted from the Court to die. James was, in fact, resolved on a far more terrible vengeance; and the Chief-Justice Jeffreys, a man of great natural powers but of violent temper, was sent to earn the Seals by a series of judicial murders which have left his name a byword for cruelty. Three hundred and fifty rebels were hanged in the "Bloody Circuit," as Jeffreys made his way through Dorset and Somerset. More than eight hundred were sold into slavery beyond sea. A yet larger number were whipped and imprisoned. The Queen, the maids of honour, the courtiers, even the Judge himself, made shameless profit from the sale of pardons. What roused pity above all were the

Digitized by Google

cruelties wreaked upon women. Some were scourged from market-town to market-town. Mrs. Lisle, the wife of one of the Regicides, was sent to the block at Winchester for harbouring a rebel. Elizabeth Gaunt, for the same act of womanly charity, was burned at Tyburn. Pity turned into horror when it was found that cruelty such as this was avowed and sanctioned by the King. Even the cold heart of General Churchill, to whose energy the victory at Sedgemoor had mainly been owing, revolted at the ruthlessness with which James turned away from all appeals for mercy. "This marble," he cried as he struck the chimney-piece on which he leant, "is not harder than the King's heart." But it was soon plain that the terror which the butchery was meant to strike into the people was part of a larger purpose. The revolt was made a pretext for a vast increase of the standing army. Charles, as we have seen, had silently and cautiously raised it to nearly ten thousand men; James raised it at one swoop to twenty thousand. The employment of this force was to be at home, not abroad, for the hope of an English policy in foreign affairs had already faded away. In the design which James had at heart he could look for no consent from Parliament; and however his pride revolted against a dependence on France, it was only by French gold and French soldiers that he could hope to hold the Parliament permanently at bay. A week therefore after his accession he assured Lewis that his gratitude and devotion to him equalled that of Charles himself. "Tell your master," he said to the French ambassador, "that without his protection I can do nothing. He has a right to be consulted, and it is my wish to consult him, about everything." The pledge of subservience was rewarded with the promise of a subsidy, and the promise was received with expressions of delight and servility which Charles would have mocked at.

**The Tyranny.**

Never had the secret league with France seemed so full of danger to English religion. Europe had long been trembling at the ambition of Lewis; it was trembling now at his bigotry. He had proclaimed warfare against civil liberty in his attack upon Holland; he declared war at this moment upon religious freedom by revoking the Edict of Nantes, the measure by which Henry the Fourth, after his abandonment of Protestantism, secured toleration and the free exercise of their worship for his Protestant subjects. It had been respected by Richelieu even in his victory over the Huguenots, and only lightly tampered with by Mazarin. But from the beginning of his reign Lewis had resolved to set aside its provisions, and his revocation of it in 1685 was only the natural close of a progressive system of persecution. The Revocation was followed by outrages more cruel than even the bloodshed of Alva. Dragoons were quartered on Protestant families, women were flung from their sick-beds into the streets, children were torn from their mothers' arms to be brought up

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE SECOND STUART TYRANNY. 1682-1688.

in Catholicism, ministers were sent to the galleys. In spite of the royal edicts, which forbade even flight to the victims of these horrible atrocities, a hundred thousand Protestants fled over the borders, and Holland, Switzerland, the Palatinate, were filled with French exiles. Thousands found refuge in England, and their industry founded in the fields east of London the silk trade of Spitalfields. But while Englishmen were quivering with horror at the news from France, James in defiance of the law was filling his new army with Catholic officers. He dismissed Halifax on his refusal to consent to a plan for repealing the Test Act, and met the Parliament in 1686 with a haughty declaration that whether legal or no his grant of commissions to Catholics must not be questioned, and a demand of supplies for his new troops. Loyal as was the temper of the Houses, their alarm at Popery and at a standing army was yet stronger than their loyalty. The Commons by the majority of a single vote deferred the grant of supplies till grievances were redressed, and demanded in their address the recall of the illegal commissions. The Lords took a bolder tone; and the protest of the bishops against any infringement of the Test Act was backed by the eloquence of Halifax. But both Houses were at once prorogued. The King resolved to obtain from the judges what he could not obtain from Parliament. He remodelled the bench by dismissing four judges who refused to lend themselves to his plans; and their successors decided in the case of Sir Edward Hales, a Catholic officer in the Royal army, that a Royal dispensation could be pleaded in bar of the Test Act. The principle laid down by the judges asserted the right of the Crown to override the laws; and it was applied by James with a reckless impatience of all decency and self-restraint. Catholics were admitted into civil and military offices without stint, and four Roman Catholic peers were sworn as members of the Privy Council. The laws which forbade the presence of Catholic priests in the realm or the open exercise of Catholic worship were set at nought. A gorgeous chapel was opened in the Palace of St. James for the worship of the King. Carmelites, Benedictines, Franciscans, appeared in their religious garb in the streets of London, and the Jesuits set up a crowded school in the Savoy.

1686.

**James and the Church.**

The quick growth of discontent at these acts would have startled a wiser man into prudence, but James prided himself on the reckless violence of his procedure. A riot which took place on the opening of a fresh Catholic chapel in the City was followed by the establishment of a camp of thirteen thousand men at Hounslow to overawe the capital. The course which James intended to follow in England was shown by the course he was following in the sister kingdoms. In Scotland he acted as a pure despot. He placed its government in the hands of two lords, Melfort and Perth, who had embraced his own religion, and put

Digitized by Google

a Catholic in command of the Castle of Edinburgh. Under Charles the Scotch Parliament had been the mere creature of the Crown, but servile as were its members, there was a point at which their servility stopped. When James boldly required from them the toleration of Catholics, they refused to pass such an Act. It was in vain that the King tempted them to consent by the offer of a free trade with England. "Shall we sell our God?" was the indignant reply. James at once ordered the Scotch judges to treat all laws against Catholics as null and void, and his orders were obeyed. In Ireland his policy threw off even the disguise of law. Papists were admitted by the King's command to the Council and to civil offices. A Catholic, Lord Tyrconnell, was put at the head of the army, and set instantly about its re-organization by cashiering Protestant officers and by admitting two thousand Catholic natives into its ranks. Meanwhile James had begun in England a bold and systematic attack upon the Church. He regarded his ecclesiastical supremacy as a weapon providentially left to him for undoing the work which it had enabled his predecessors to do. Under Henry and Elizabeth it had been used to turn the Church of England from Catholic to Protestant. Under James it should be used to turn it back again from Protestant to Catholic. The High Commission indeed had been declared illegal by an Act of the Long Parliament, and this Act had been confirmed by the Parliament of the Restoration. But the statute was roughly set aside. Seven Commissioners were appointed in 1686 for the government of the Church, with Jeffreys at their head; and the first blow of the Commission was at the Bishop of London. James had forbidden the clergy to preach against Popery, and ordered Bishop Compton to suspend a London vicar who set this order at defiance. The Bishop's refusal was punished by his own suspension. But the pressure of the Commission only drove the clergy to a bolder defiance of the Royal will. Sermons against superstition were preached from every pulpit; and the two most famous divines of the day, Tillotson and Stillingfleet, put themselves at the head of a host of controversialists who scattered pamphlets and tracts from every printing press.

**James and the Universities.**

Foiled in his direct efforts to overawe the Church, James resolved to attack it in the great institutions which had till now been its stronghold. To secure the Universities for Catholicism was to seize the only training schools which the clergy possessed. Cambridge indeed escaped easily. A Benedictine monk who presented himself with Royal letters recommending him for the degree of a master of arts was rejected on his refusal to sign the Articles; and the Vice-Chancellor paid for the rejection by dismissal from his office. But a far more violent and obstinate attack was directed against Oxford. The Master of University College, who declared himself a convert, was authorized to retain his post in defiance of the law. Massey, a Roman Catholic, was

Digitized by Google

SEC. VI. THE SECOND STUART TYRANNY. 1682-1688.

presented by the Crown to the Deanery of Christ Church. Magdalen was the wealthiest Oxford College, and James in 1687 recommended one Farmer, a Catholic of infamous life and not even qualified by statute for the office, to its vacant headship. The Fellows remonstrated, and on the rejection of their remonstrance chose Hough, one of their own number, as their President. The Commission declared the election void; and James, shamed out of his first candidate, recommended a second, Parker, Bishop of Oxford, a Catholic in heart and the meanest of his courtiers. But the Fellows held stubbornly to their legal head. It was in vain that the King visited Oxford, summoned them to his presence, and rated them as they knelt before him like schoolboys. "I am King," he said, "I will be obeyed! Go to your chapel this instant, and elect the Bishop! Let those who refuse look to it, for they shall feel the whole weight of my hand!" It was felt that to give Magdalen as well as Christ Church into Catholic hands was to turn Oxford into a Catholic seminary, and the King's threats were calmly disregarded. But they were soon carried out. A special Commission visited the University, pronounced Hough an intruder, set aside his appeal to the law, burst open the door of his President's house to install Parker in his place, and on their refusal to submit deprived the Fellows of their fellowships. The expulsion of the Fellows was followed on a like refusal by that of the Demies. Parker, who died immediately after his installation, was succeeded by a Roman Catholic bishop in partibus, Bonaventure Giffard, and twelve Catholics were admitted to fellowships in a single day.

**Declaration of Indulgence.**

1687.

The work James was doing in the Church he was doing with as mad a recklessness in the State. Parliament, which had been kept silent by prorogation after prorogation, was finally dissolved; and the King was left without a check in his defiance of the law. It was in vain that the bulk of the Catholic gentry stood aloof and predicted the inevitable reaction his course must bring about, or that Rome itself counselled greater moderation. James was infatuated with the success of his enterprises. He resolved to show the world that even the closest ties of blood were as nothing to him if they conflicted with the demands of his faith. His marriage with Anne Hyde, the daughter of Clarendon, bound both the Chancellor's sons to his fortunes; and on his accession he had sent his elder brother-in-law, Edward, Earl of Clarendon, as Lord Lieutenant to Ireland, and raised the younger, Laurence, Earl of Rochester, to the post of Lord Treasurer. But Rochester was now told that the King could not safely entrust so great a charge to anyone who did not share his sentiments on religion, and on his refusal to abandon his faith he was driven from office. His brother, Clarendon, shared his fall. A Catholic, Lord Bellasys, became First Lord of the Treasury, which was put into commission after Rochester's removal; and another Catholic, Lord

Digitized by Google

Arundell, became Lord Privy Seal. Petre, a Jesuit, was called to the Privy Council. The Nuncio of the Pope was received in state at Windsor. But even James could hardly fail to perceive the growth of public discontent. The great Tory nobles, if they were staunch for the Crown, were as resolute Englishmen in their hatred of mere tyranny as the Whigs themselves. James gave the Duke of Norfolk the sword of State to carry before him as he went to Mass. The Duke stopped at the Chapel door. "Your father would have gone further," said the King. "Your Majesty's father was the better man," replied the Duke, "and he would not have gone so far." The young Duke of Somerset was ordered to introduce the Nuncio into the Presence Chamber. "I am advised," he answered, "that I cannot obey your Majesty without breaking the law." "Do you not know that I am above the law?" James asked angrily. "Your Majesty may be, but I am not," retorted the Duke. He was dismissed from his post; but the spirit of resistance spread fast. In spite of the King's letters, the governors of the Charter House, who numbered among them some of the greatest English nobles, refused to admit a Catholic to the benefits of the foundation. The most devoted loyalists began to murmur when James demanded apostasy as a proof of their loyalty. He had soon in fact to abandon all hope of bringing the Church or the Tories over to his will. He turned, as Charles had turned, to the Nonconformists, and published in 1687 a Declaration of Indulgence which annulled the penal laws against Nonconformists and Catholics alike, and abrogated every Act which imposed a test as a qualification for office in Church or State. The temptation to accept such an offer was great, for, since the fall of Shaftesbury, persecution had fallen heavily on the Protestant dissidents, and we can hardly wonder that the Nonconformists wavered for a time. But the great body of them, and all the more venerable names among them, remained true to the cause of freedom. Baxter, Howe, Bunyan, all refused an Indulgence which could only be purchased by the violent overthrow of the law. A mere handful of addresses could be procured by the utmost pressure, and it was soon plain that the attempt to divide the forces of Protestantism had utterly failed.

**The Seven Bishops.**

The failure of his Declaration only spurred James to an attempt to procure a repeal of the Test Act from Parliament itself. But no free Parliament could be brought, as he knew, to consent to its repeal. The Lords indeed could be swamped by lavish creations of new peers. "Your troop of horse," his minister, Lord Sunderland, told Churchill, "shall be called up into the House of Lords." But it was a harder matter to secure a compliant House of Commons. The Lord Lieutenants were directed to bring about such a "regulation" of the governing body in boroughs as would ensure the return of candidates pledged to the repeal of the Test, and to question every magistrate in their county

Digitized by Google

as to his vote. Half of them at once refused, and a long list of great nobles—the Earls of Oxford, Shrewsbury, Dorset, Derby, Pembroke, Rutland, Abergavenny, Thanet, Northampton, and Abingdon—were at once dismissed from their Lord Lieutenancies. The justices when questioned simply replied that they would vote according to their consciences, and send members to Parliament who would protect the Protestant religion. After repeated "regulations" it was found impossible to form a corporate body which would return representatives willing to comply with the Royal will. All thought of a Parliament had to be abandoned; and even the most bigoted courtiers counselled moderation at this proof of the stubborn opposition which James must prepare to encounter from the peers, the gentry, and the trading classes. The clergy alone still hesitated in any open act of resistance. Even the tyranny of the Commission and the attack on the Universities failed to rouse into open disaffection men who had been preaching Sunday after Sunday the doctrine of passive obedience to the worst of kings. But James seemed resolved to rouse them. On the twenty-seventh of April, 1688, he issued a fresh Declaration of Indulgence, and ordered every clergyman to read it during divine service on two successive Sundays. Little time was given for deliberation, but little time was needed. The clergy refused almost to a man to be the instruments of their own humiliation. The Declaration was read in only four of the London churches, and in these the congregation flocked out of church at the first words of it. Nearly all of the country clergy refused to obey the Royal orders. The Bishops went with the rest of the clergy. A few days before the appointed Sunday Archbishop Sancroft called his suffragans together, and the six who were able to appear at Lambeth signed a temperate protest to the King, in which they declined to publish an illegal Declaration. "It is a standard of rebellion," James exclaimed as the Primate presented the paper; and the resistance of the clergy was no sooner announced to him than he determined to wreak his vengeance on the Prelates who had signed the protest. He ordered the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to deprive them of their sees, but in this matter even the Commissioners shrank from obeying him. The Chancellor, Lord Jeffreys, advised a prosecution for libel as an easier mode of punishment; and the Bishops, who refused to give bail, were committed on this charge to the Tower. They passed to their prison amidst the shouts of a great multitude, the sentinels knelt for their blessing as they entered its gates, and the soldiers of the garrison drank their healths. So threatening was the temper of the nation that his ministers pressed James to give way. But his obstinacy grew with the danger. "Indulgence," he said, "ruined my father;" and on June the 29th the Bishops appeared as criminals at the bar of the King's Bench. The jury had been packed, the judges were mere tools of the

Digitized by Google

Crown, but judges and jury were alike overawed by the indignation of the people at large. No sooner had the foreman of the jury uttered the words "Not guilty" than a roar of applause burst from the crowd, and horsemen spurred along every road to carry over the country the news of the acquittal.

## Section VII.—William of Orange.

[*Authorities.*—As before.]

**The Greatness of France.**

Amidst the tumult of the Plot and the Exclusion Bill the wiser among English statesmen had fixed their hopes steadily on the succession of Mary, the elder daughter and heiress of James. The tyranny of her father's reign made this succession the hope of the people at large. But to Europe the importance of the change, whenever it should come about, lay not so much in the succession of Mary, as in the new power which such an event would give to her husband, William Prince of Orange. We have come in fact to a moment when the struggle of England against the aggression of its King blends with the larger struggle of Europe against the aggression of Lewis the Fourteenth, and it is only by a rapid glance at the political state of the Continent that we can understand the real nature and results of the Revolution which drove James from the throne.

At this moment France was the dominant power in Christendom. The religious wars which began with the Reformation broke the strength of the nations around her. Spain was no longer able to fight the battle of Catholicism. The Peace of Westphalia, by the independence it gave to the German princes and the jealousy it left alive between the Protestant and Catholic powers, destroyed the strength of the Empire. The German branch of the House of Austria, spent with the long struggle of the Thirty Years' War, had enough to do in battling hard against the advance of the Turks from Hungary on Vienna. The victories of Gustavus and of the generals whom he formed had been dearly purchased by the exhaustion of Sweden. The United Provinces were as yet hardly regarded as a great power, and were trammelled by their contest with England for the empire of the seas. England, which under Cromwell promised for a moment to take the lead in Europe, sank under Charles and James into a dependency of France. France alone profited by the general wreck. The wise policy of Henry the Fourth in securing religious peace by a toleration to the Protestants had undone the ill effects of its religious wars. The Huguenots were still numerous south of the Loire, but the loss of their fortresses had turned their energies into the peaceful channels of industry and trade. Feudal disorder was roughly put



Digitized by Google

SEC. VII.
WILLIAM OF ORANGE.

down by Richelieu, and the policy by which he gathered all local power into the hands of the crown, though fatal in the end to the real welfare of France, gave it for the moment an air of good government and a command over its internal resources which no other country could boast. Its compact and fertile territory, the natural activity and enterprise of its people, and the rapid growth of its commerce and of manufactures were sources of natural wealth which even its heavy taxation failed to check. In the latter half of the seventeenth century France was looked upon as the wealthiest power in Europe. The yearly income of the French crown was double that of England, and even Lewis the Fourteenth trusted as much to the credit of his treasury as to the glory of his arms. "After all," he said, when the fortunes of war began to turn against him, "it is the last sovereign which must win!" It was in fact this superiority in wealth which enabled France to set on foot forces such as had never been seen in Europe since the downfall of Rome. At the opening of the reign of Lewis the Fourteenth its army mustered a hundred thousand men. With the war against Holland it rose to nearly two hundred thousand. In the last struggle against the Grand Alliance there was a time when it counted nearly half a million of men in arms. Nor was France content with these enormous land forces. Since the ruin of Spain the fleets of Holland and of England had alone disputed the empire of the seas. Under Richelieu and Mazarin France could hardly be looked upon as a naval power. But the early years of Lewis saw the creation of a navy of 100 men of war, and the fleets of France soon held their own against England or the Dutch.

**Lewis the Fourteenth.**

Such a power would have been formidable at any time; but it was doubly formidable when directed by statesmen who in knowledge and ability were without rivals in Europe. No diplomatist could compare with Lionne, no war minister with Louvois, no financier with Colbert. Their young master, Lewis the Fourteenth, bigoted, narrow-minded, commonplace as he was, without personal honour or personal courage, without gratitude and without pity, insane in his pride, insatiable in his vanity, brutal in his selfishness, had still many of the qualities of a great ruler: industry, patience, quickness of resolve, firmness of purpose, a capacity for discerning greatness and using it, an immense self-belief and self-confidence, and a temper utterly destitute indeed of real greatness, but with a dramatic turn for seeming to be great. As a politician Lewis had simply to reap the harvest which the two great Cardinals who went before him had sown. Both had used to the profit of France the exhaustion and dissension which the wars of religion had brought upon Europe. Richelieu turned the scale against the House of Austria by his alliance with Sweden, with the United Provinces, and with the Protestant princes of Germany; and the two great treaties by which Mazarin ended the Thirty Years' War, the

Digitized by Google

Treaty of Westphalia and the Treaty of the Pyrenees, left the Empire disorganized and Spain powerless. From that moment indeed Spain had sunk into a strange decrepitude. Robbed of the chief source of her wealth by the independence of Holland, weakened at home by the revolt of Portugal, her infantry annihilated by Condé in his victory of Rocroi, her fleet ruined by the Dutch, her best blood drained away to the Indies, the energies of her people destroyed by the suppression of all liberty, civil or religious, her intellectual life crushed by the Inquisition, her industry crippled by the expulsion of the Moors, by financial oppression, and by the folly of her colonial system, the kingdom which under Philip the Second had aimed at the empire of the world lay helpless and exhausted under Philip the Fourth. The aim of Lewis from 1661, the year when he really became master of France, was to carry on the policy of his predecessors, and above all to complete the ruin of Spain. The conquest of the Spanish provinces in the Netherlands would carry his border to the Scheldt. A more distant hope lay in the probable extinction of the Austrian line which now sat on the throne of Spain. By securing the succession to their throne for a French prince, not only Castile and Arragon with the Spanish dependencies in Italy and the Netherlands, but the Spanish empire in the New World would be added to the dominions of France. Nothing could save Spain but a union of the European powers, and to prevent this union by his negotiations was a work at which Lewis toiled for years. The intervention of the Empire was prevented by a renewal of the old alliances between France and the lesser German princes. A league with the Turks gave Austria enough to do on her eastern border. The policy of Charles the Second bound England to inaction. Spain was at last completely isolated, and the death of Philip the Fourth gave a pretence for war of which Lewis availed himself in 1667. Flanders was occupied in two months. Franche-Comté was seized in seventeen days. But the suddenness and completeness of the French success awoke a general terror before which the King's skilful diplomacy gave way. Holland was roused to a sense of danger at home by the appearance of French arms on the Rhine. England woke from her lethargy on the French seizure of the coast-towns of Flanders. Sweden joined the two Protestant powers in the Triple Alliance; and the dread of a wider league forced Lewis to content himself with the southern half of Flanders and the possession of a string of fortresses which practically left him master of the Netherlands.

**William of Orange.**

Lewis was maddened by the check. He not only hated the Dutch as Protestants and Republicans; but he saw in them an obstacle which had to be taken out of the way ere he could resume his attack on Spain. Four years were spent in preparations for a decisive blow at this new enemy. The French army was raised to a hundred and



Digitized by Google

SEC. VII.
WILLIAM OF ORANGE.

eighty thousand men. Colbert created a fleet which rivalled that of Holland in number and equipment. Sweden was again won over. England was again secured by the Treaty of Dover. Meanwhile Holland lay wrapt in a false security. The alliance with France had been its traditional policy, and it was especially dear to the party of the great merchant class which had mounted to power on the fall of the House of Orange. John de Witt, the leader of this party, though he had been forced to conclude the Triple Alliance by the advance of Lewis to the Rhine, still clung blindly to the friendship of France. His trust only broke down when the French army crossed the Dutch border in 1672 and the glare of its watch-fires was seen from the walls of Amsterdam. For the moment Holland lay crushed at the feet of Lewis, but the arrogance of the conqueror roused again the stubborn courage which had wrung victory from Alva and worn out the pride of Philip the Second. The fall of De Witt raised the Orange party again to power, and called the Prince of Orange to the head of the Republic. Though the young Stadholder had hardly reached manhood, his great qualities at once made themselves felt. His earlier life had schooled him in a wonderful self-control. He had been left fatherless and all but friendless in childhood, he had been bred among men who looked on his very existence as a danger to the State, his words had been watched, his looks noted, his friends jealously withdrawn. In such an atmosphere the boy grew up silent, wary, self-contained, grave in temper, cold in demeanour, blunt and even repulsive in address. He was weak and sickly from his cradle, and manhood brought with it an asthma and consumption which shook his frame with a constant cough; his face was sullen and bloodless and scored with deep lines which told of ceaseless pain. But beneath this cold and sickly presence lay a fiery and commanding temper, an immoveable courage, and a political ability of the highest order. William was a born statesman. Neglected as his education had been in other ways, for he knew nothing of letters or of art, he had been carefully trained in politics by John de Witt; and the wide knowledge with which in his first address to the States-General the young Stadholder reviewed the general state of Europe, the cool courage with which he calculated the chances of the struggle, at once won him the trust of his countrymen. Their trust was soon rewarded. Holland was saved, and province after province won back from the arms of France, by William's dauntless resolve. Like his great ancestor, William the Silent, he was a luckless commander, and no general had to bear more frequent defeats. But he profited by defeat as other men profit by victory. His bravery indeed was of that nobler cast which rises to its height in moments of ruin and dismay. The coolness with which, boy-general as he was, he rallied his broken squadrons amidst the rout of Seneff and wrested from Condé

Digitized by Google

at the last the fruits of his victory, moved his veteran opponent to a generous admiration. It was in such moments indeed that the real temper of the man broke through the veil of his usual reserve. A strange light flashed from his eyes as soon as he was under fire, and in the terror and confusion of defeat his manners took an ease and gaiety that charmed every soldier around him.

**William and Charles II.**

The political ability of William was seen in the skill with which he drew Spain and the Empire into a coalition against France. But France was still matchless in arms, and the effect of her victories was seconded by the selfishness of the allies, and above all by the treacherous diplomacy of Charles the Second. William was forced to consent in 1679 to the Treaty of Nimeguen, which left France dominant over Europe as she had never been before. Holland indeed was saved from the revenge of Lewis, but fresh spoils had been wrested from Spain, and Franche-Comté, which had been restored at the close of the former war, was retained at the end of this. Above all France overawed Europe by the daring and success with which she had faced, single-handed, the wide coalition against her. Her King's arrogance became unbounded. Lorraine was turned into a subject-state. Genoa was bombarded, and its Doge forced to seek pardon in the antechambers of Versailles. The Pope was humiliated by the march of an army upon Rome to avenge a slight offered to the French ambassador. The Empire was outraged by a shameless seizure of Imperial fiefs in Elsass and elsewhere. The whole Protestant world was defied by the horrible cruelties which followed the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. In the mind of Lewis peace meant a series of outrages on the powers around him, but every outrage helped the cool and silent adversary who was looking on from the Hague to build up the Great Alliance of all Europe, from which alone he looked for any effectual check to the ambition of France. The experience of the last war had taught William that of such an alliance England must form a part; and we have already seen how much English politics were influenced during the reign of Charles by the struggle between William and Lewis to secure English aid. A reconciliation of the King with his Parliament was an indispensable step towards freeing Charles from his dependence on France, and it was to such a reconciliation that William at first bent his efforts, but he was foiled by the steadiness with which Charles clung to the power whose aid was needful to carry out the schemes which he was contemplating. In his leanings towards France however Charles stood utterly alone. His most devoted ministers foiled their sovereign's efforts as far as they could. Even Arlington, Catholic as at heart he was, refused to look on while France made the Flemish coast its own, and despatched Temple to frame the Triple Alliance which defeated its hopes. Danby was even more hostile to France, and in wresting from his master permission to

Digitized by Google

SEC. VII.
WILLIAM OF ORANGE.

offer William the hand of Mary he dealt Lewis what proved to be a fatal blow. James was without a son, and the marriage with Mary secured to William on his father-in-law's death the aid of England in his great enterprise. But it was impossible to wait for that event, and though William used his new position to bring Charles round to a more patriotic policy, his efforts were still fruitless. The storm of the Popish Plot complicated his position. In the earlier stages of the Exclusion Bill, when the Parliament seemed resolved simply to pass over James and to seat Mary at once on the throne after her uncle's death, William stood apart from the struggle, doubtful of its issue, though prepared to accept the good luck if it came to him. The fatal error of Shaftesbury in advancing the claims of Monmouth forced him into activity. To preserve his wife's right of succession, with all the great issues which were to come of it, no other course was left than to adopt the cause of the Duke of York. In the crisis of the struggle, therefore, William threw his whole weight on the side of James. The eloquence of Halifax secured the rejection of the Exclusion Bill, and Halifax (as we know now) was the mouthpiece of William.

**William and James II.**

But while England was seething with the madness of the Popish Plot and of the royalist reaction, the great European struggle was drawing nearer and nearer. The patience of Germany was worn out, and in 1686 its princes bound themselves in the Treaty of Augsburg to resist further aggressions on the part of France. From that moment a fresh war became inevitable, and William watched the course of his father-in-law with redoubled anxiety. His efforts in England had utterly failed. James had renewed his brother's secret treaty with France, and plunged into a quarrel with his people which of itself would have prevented him from giving any aid in a struggle abroad. The Prince could only silently look on, with a desperate hope that James might yet be brought to a nobler policy. He refused all encouragement to the leading malcontents who were already calling on him to interfere in arms. On the other hand he declined to support the King in his schemes for the abolition of the Test. "You ask me," he said to his father-in-law, "to countenance an attack on my religion. That I cannot do!" If he still cherished hopes of bringing about a peace between the King and people which might enable him to enlist England in the Grand Alliance, they vanished in 1687 before the Declaration of Indulgence. In union with Mary he addressed a temperate protest against this measure to the King. But the discovery of the plans which James was now forming, plans which were intended to rob Mary of a part of her future dominions as well as to cripple for ever the power of England, forced him at last into earnest action. The King felt strong enough to carry through his system of government during his own lifetime; but the protest of Mary and William left little doubt that the changes he had made would be overthrown at

Digitized by Google

his death. He resolved therefore (if we trust the statement of the French ambassador) to place Ireland in such a position of independence that she might serve as a refuge for his Catholic subjects from any Protestant successor. Clarendon was succeeded in the charge of the island by the Catholic Lord Tyrconnell, and the new governor went roughly to work. Every Englishman was turned out of office. Every Judge, every Privy Councillor, every Mayor and Alderman of a borough, was soon a Catholic and an Irishman. In a few months the English ascendency was overthrown, and the life and fortune of every English settler were at the mercy of the natives on whom they had trampled since Cromwell's day. The Irish army, purged of its Protestant soldiers, was entrusted to Catholic officers, and the dread of another massacre spread panic through the island. Fifteen hundred Protestant families fled terror-stricken across the Channel. The rest of the Protestants gathered together and prepared for self-defence. William had a right on Mary's behalf to guard against such a plan of dismembering her inheritance; and Dykvelt, who was despatched as his ambassador to England, organized with wonderful ability the various elements of disaffection into a compact opposition. Danby and Bishop Compton answered for the Church. The Nonconformists were won by a promise of toleration. A regular correspondence was established between the Prince and some of the great nobles. But William still shrank from the plan of an intervention in arms. General as the disaffection undoubtedly was, the position of James seemed to be secure. He counted on the aid of France. He had an army of twenty thousand men. Scotland, crushed by the failure of Argyle's rising, could give no such aid as it gave to the Long Parliament. Ireland was ready to rise for the Catholic cause and to throw, if needed, its soldiers on the western coast. Above all it was doubtful if in England itself disaffection would turn into actual rebellion. The "Bloody Assize" had left its terror on the Whigs. The Tories and the Churchmen, angered as they were, were still hampered by their doctrine of non-resistance. It was still therefore the aim of William to discourage all violent counsels, and to confine himself to organizing such a general opposition as would force James by legal means to reconcile himself to the country, to abandon his policy at home and abroad, and to join the alliance against France.

**The Invitation.**

But at this moment the whole course of William's policy was changed by an unforeseen event. His own patience and that of the nation rested on the certainty of Mary's succession; for James was without a son, and five years had passed since the last pregnancy of his second wife, Mary of Modena. But in the midst of the King's struggle with the Church it was announced that the Queen was again with child. Though the news was received with general unbelief, it at once forced on the crisis which William had hoped to defer. If, as the Catholics

Digitized by Google

SEC. VII.
WILLIAM OF ORANGE.

joyously foretold, the child were a boy, and, as was certain, brought up a Catholic, the highest Tory had to resolve at last whether the tyranny under which England lay should go on for ever. William could no longer blind himself to the need of a struggle and a speedy one. "It is now or never," he said to Dykvelt. The hesitation of England was indeed at an end. Danby, loyal above all to the Church and firm in his hatred of subservience to France, answered for the Tories; Compton for the High Churchmen, goaded at last into rebellion by the Declaration of Indulgence. The Earl of Devonshire, the Lord Cavendish of the Exclusion struggle, answered for the Whigs. A formal invitation to William to intervene in arms for the restoration of English liberty and the protection of the Protestant religion was signed by these leaders and carried in June to the Hague by Herbert, the most popular of English seamen, who had been deprived of his command for a refusal to vote against the Test. The nobles who signed it called on William to appear with an army, and pledged themselves to rise in arms on his landing. Whatever lingering hesitation remained was swept away by the Trial of the Bishops and the birth of a Prince of Wales. The invitation was sent from London on the very day of the Acquittal. The general excitement, the shouts of the boats which covered the river, the bonfires in every street, showed indeed that the country was on the eve of revolt. The army itself, on which James had implicitly relied, suddenly showed its sympathy with the people. James was at Hounslow when the news of the Acquittal reached him, and as he rode from the camp he heard a great shout behind him. "What is that?" he asked. "It is nothing," was the reply, "only the soldiers are glad that the Bishops are acquitted!" "Do you call that nothing?" grumbled the King. The shout told him that he stood utterly alone in his realm. The peerage, the gentry, the bishops, the clergy, the Universities, every lawyer, every trader, every farmer, stood aloof from him. His very soldiers forsook him. The most devoted Catholics pressed him to give way. But to give way was to reverse every act he had done since his accession, and to change the whole nature of his government. All show of legal rule had disappeared. Sheriffs, mayors, magistrates, appointed by the Crown in defiance of a parliamentary statute, were no real officers in the eye of the law. Even if the Houses were summoned, members returned by officers such as these could form no legal Parliament. Hardly a Minister of the Crown or a Privy Councillor exercised any lawful authority. James had brought things to such a pass that the restoration of legal government meant the absolute reversal of every act he had done. But he was in no mood to reverse his acts. His temper was only spurred to a more dogged obstinacy by danger and remonstrance. He broke up the camp at Hounslow and dispersed its troops in distant cantonments. He

Digitized by Google

dismissed the two judges who had favoured the acquittal of the Bishops. He ordered the chancellor of each diocese to report the names of the clergy who had not read the Declaration of Indulgence. But his will broke fruitlessly against the sullen resistance which met him on every side. Not a chancellor made a return to the Commissioners, and the Commissioners were cowed into inaction by the temper of the nation. When the judges who had displayed their servility to the Crown went on circuit the gentry refused to meet them. A yet fiercer irritation was kindled by the King's resolve to supply the place of the English troops, whose temper proved unserviceable for his purposes, by draughts from the Catholic army which Tyrconnell had raised in Ireland. Even the Roman Catholic peers at the Council table protested against this measure; and six officers in a single regiment laid down their commissions rather than enroll the Irish recruits among their men. The ballad of "Lillibullero," a scurrilous attack on the Irish Papists, was sung from one end of England to the other.

**William's Landing.**

What prevented revolt was the general resolve to wait for the appearance of the Prince of Orange. William was gathering forces and transports with wonderful rapidity and secresy, while noble after noble made their way to the Hague. The Earl of Shrewsbury arrived with an offer of £12,000 towards the expedition. Edward Russell, the brother of Lord Russell, appeared as the representative of the House of Bedford. They were followed by the representatives of great Tory houses, by the sons of the Marquis of Winchester, of Lord Danby, of Lord Peterborough, and by the High Church Lord Macclesfield. At home the Earls of Danby and Devonshire prepared silently with Lord Lumley for a rising in the North. In spite of the profound secresy with which all was conducted, the keen instinct of Sunderland, who had stooped to purchase continuance in office at the price of an apostasy to Catholicism, detected the preparations of William; and the sense that his master's ruin was at hand encouraged him to tell every secret of James on the promise of a pardon for the crimes to which he had lent himself. James alone remained stubborn and insensate as of old. He had no fear of a revolt unaided by the Prince of Orange, and he believed that the threat of a French attack on Holland would render William's aid impossible. But in September the long-delayed war began, and by the greatest political error of his reign Lewis threw his forces not on Holland, but on Germany. The Dutch at once felt themselves secure; the States-General gave their sanction to William's project, and the armament he had prepared gathered rapidly in the Scheldt. The news no sooner reached England than the King passed from obstinacy to panic. By draughts from Scotland and Ireland he had mustered forty thousand men, but the temper of the troops

Digitized by Google

SEC. VII.
WILLIAM OF ORANGE.

robbed him of all trust in them. He dissolved the Ecclesiastical Commission. He replaced the magistrates he had driven from office. He restored their franchises to the towns. The Chancellor carried back the Charter of London in state into the City. James dismissed Sunderland from office, and produced before the peers who were in London proofs of the birth of his child, which was almost universally believed to be a Catholic imposture. But concession and proof came too late. Detained by ill winds, beaten back on its first venture by a violent storm, William's fleet of six hundred transports, escorted by fifty men-of-war, anchored on the fifth of November in Torbay; and his army, thirteen thousand men strong, entered Exeter amidst the shouts of its citizens. His coming had not been looked for in the West, and for a week no great landowner joined him. But nobles and squires soon flocked to his camp, and the adhesion of Plymouth secured his rear. Meanwhile Danby, dashing at the head of a hundred horsemen into York, gave the signal for a rising in the North. The militia gave back his shout of "A free Parliament and the Protestant Religion!" Peers and gentry flocked to his standard; and a march on Nottingham united his forces to those under Devonshire, who had mustered at Derby the great lords of the midland and eastern counties. Everywhere the revolt was triumphant. The garrison of Hull declared for a free Parliament. The Duke of Norfolk appeared at the head of three hundred gentlemen in the market-place at Norwich. Townsmen and gownsmen greeted Lord Lovelace at Oxford with uproarious welcome. Bristol threw open its gates to the Prince of Orange, who advanced steadily on Salisbury, where James had mustered his forces. But the Royal army fell back in disorder. Its very leaders were secretly pledged to William, and the desertion of Lord Churchill was followed by that of so many other officers that James abandoned the struggle in despair. He fled to London to hear that his daughter Anne had left St. James' to join Danby at Nottingham. "God help me," cried the wretched King, "for my own children have forsaken me!" His spirit was utterly broken; and though he promised to call the Houses together, and despatched commissioners to Hungerford to treat with William on the terms of a free Parliament, in his heart he had resolved on flight. Parliament, he said to the few who still clung to him, would force on him concessions he could not endure; and he only waited for news of the escape of his wife and child to make his way to the Isle of Sheppey, where a hoy lay ready to carry him to France. Some rough fishermen, who took him for a Jesuit, prevented his escape, and a troop of Life Guards brought him back in safety to London: but it was the policy of William and his advisers to further a flight which removed their chief difficulty out of the way. It would have been hard to depose James had he remained, and perilous to keep him prisoner: but the entry of the Dutch troops into London, the silence

*Nov.* 1688.

Digitized by Google

of the Prince, and an order to leave St. James', filled the King with fresh terrors, and taking advantage of the means of escape which were almost openly placed at his disposal, James a second time quitted London and embarked on the 23rd of December unhindered for France.

Before flying James had burnt most of the writs convoking the new Parliament, had disbanded his army, and destroyed so far as he could all means of government. For a few days there was a wild burst of panic and outrage in London, but the orderly instinct of the people soon reasserted itself. The Lords who were at the moment in London provided on their own authority as Privy Councillors for the more pressing needs of administration, and resigned their authority into William's hands on his arrival in the capital. The difficulty which arose from the absence of any person legally authorized to call Parliament together was got over by convoking the House of Peers, and forming a second body of all members who had sat in the Commons in the reign of Charles the Second, with the Aldermen and Common Councillors of London. Both bodies requested William to take on himself the provisional government of the kingdom, and to issue circular letters inviting the electors of every town and county to send up representatives to a Convention which met in January, 1689. Both Houses were found equally resolved against any recall of or negotiation with the fallen King. But with this step their unanimity ended. The Whigs, who formed a majority in the Commons, voted a resolution which, illogical and inconsistent as it seemed, was well adapted to unite in its favour every element of the opposition to James: the Churchman who was simply scared by his bigotry, the Tory who doubted the right of a nation to depose its King, the Whig who held the theory of a contract between King and People. They voted that King James, "having endeavoured to subvert the constitution of this kingdom by breaking the original contract between King and People, and by the advice of Jesuits and other wicked persons having violated the fundamental laws, and having withdrawn himself out of the kingdom, has abdicated the Government, and that the throne is thereby vacant." But in the Lords the Tories were still in the ascendant, and the resolution was fiercely debated. Archbishop Sancroft with the High Tories held that no crime could bring about a forfeiture of the crown, and that James still remained King, but that his tyranny had given the nation a right to withdraw from him the actual exercise of government and to entrust its functions to a Regency. The moderate Tories under Danby's guidance admitted that James had ceased to be King, but denied that the throne could be vacant, and contended that from the moment of his abdication the sovereignty vested in his daughter Mary. It was in vain that the eloquence of Halifax backed the Whig peers in struggling for the resolution of the Commons as it stood. The plan of a Regency was lost by a single vote, and Danby's scheme was

1689.

Digitized by Google

SEC. VII.
WILLIAM OF ORANGE.

adopted by a large majority. But both the Tory courses found a sudden obstacle in William. He declined to be Regent. He had no mind, he said to Danby, to be his wife's gentleman-usher. Mary, on the other hand, refused to accept the crown save in conjunction with her husband. The two declarations put an end to the question. It was agreed that William and Mary should be acknowledged as joint sovereigns, but that the actual administration should rest with William alone. Somers, a young lawyer who had just distinguished himself in the trial of the Bishops, and who was destined to play a great part in later history, drew up a Declaration of Rights which was presented on February 13th to William and Mary by the two Houses in the banquetting-room at Whitehall. It recited the misgovernment of James, his abdication, and the resolve of the Lords and Commons to assert the ancient rights and liberties of English subjects. It denied the right of any king to exercise a dispensing power, or to exact money or to maintain an army save by consent of Parliament. It asserted for the subject a right to petition, to a free choice of representatives in Parliament, and a pure and merciful administration of justice. It declared the right of both Houses to liberty of debate. In full faith that these principles would be accepted and maintained by William and Mary, it ended with declaring the Prince and Princess of Orange King and Queen of England. At the close of the Declaration, Halifax, in the name of the Estates of the Realm, prayed them to receive the crown. William accepted the offer in his own name and his wife's, and declared in a few words the resolve of both to maintain the laws and to govern by advice of Parliament.

### Section VIII.—The Grand Alliance. 1689–1694.

[*Authorities.*—As before.]

**The Grand Alliance.**

The blunder of Lewis in choosing Germany instead of Holland for his point of attack was all but atoned for by the brilliant successes with which he opened the war. The whole country west of the Rhine was soon in his hands; his armies were master of the Palatinate, and penetrated even to Wurtemburg. His hopes had never been higher than at the moment when the arrival of James at St. Germains dashed all hope to the ground. Lewis was at once thrown back on a war of defence, and the brutal ravages which marked the retreat of his armies from the Rhine revealed the bitterness with which his pride stooped to the necessity. The Palatinate was turned into a desert. The same ruin fell on the stately palace of the Elector at Heidelberg, on the venerable tombs of the Emperors at Speyer, on the town of the trader, on the hut of the vine-dresser. Outrages such as

Digitized by Google

these only hastened the work of his great rival. In accepting the English throne William had knit together England and Holland, the two great Protestant powers whose fleets had the mastery of the sea, as his diplomacy had knit all Germany together a year before in the Treaty of Augsburg. But the formation of the Grand Alliance might still have been delayed by the reluctance of the Emperor to league with Protestant States against a Catholic King, when the ravage of the Palatinate woke a thirst for vengeance in every German heart before which all hesitation passed away. The reception of James as still King of England at St. Germains gave England just ground for a declaration of war, a step in which it was soon followed by Holland, and the two countries at once agreed to stand by one another in their struggle against France. The adhesion of the Empire and of the two branches of the House of Austria to this agreement completed the Grand Alliance which William had designed. When Savoy joined the allies in May 1689, France found herself girt in on every side save Switzerland with a ring of foes. The Scandinavian kingdoms alone stood aloof from the confederacy of Europe, and their neutrality was unfriendly to France. Lewis was left without a single ally save the Turk: but the energy and quickness of movement which sprang from the concentration of the power of France in a single hand still left the contest an equal one. The Empire was slow; Austria was distracted by the war with the Turks; Spain was all but powerless; Holland and England were alone earnest in the struggle, and England could as yet give little aid in the war. An English brigade, formed from the regiments raised by James, joined the Dutch army on the Sambre, and distinguished itself under Churchill, who had been rewarded for his treason by the title of Earl of Marlborough, in a brisk skirmish with the enemy at Walcourt. But William had as yet grave work to do at home.

SEC. VIII. THE GRAND ALLIANCE. 1689-1694.

In England not a sword had been drawn for James. In Scotland his tyranny had been yet greater than in England, and so far as the Lowlands went the fall of his tyranny was as rapid and complete. No sooner had he called his troops southward to meet William's invasion than Edinburgh rose in revolt. The western peasants were at once up in arms, and the Episcopalian clergy who had been the instruments of the Stuart misgovernment ever since the Restoration were rabbled and driven from their parsonages in every parish. The news of these disorders forced William to act, though he was without a show of legal authority over Scotland; and, on the advice of the Scotch Lords present in London, he ventured to summon a Convention similar to that which had been summoned in England, and on his own responsibility to set aside the laws which excluded Presbyterians from the Scotch Parliament. This Convention resolved that James had forfeited the crown by misgovernment, and offered it to William and

**William and Scotland.**

Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII.
THE GRAND ALLIANCE.
1689-1694.

Mary. The offer was accompanied by a Claim of Right framed on the model of the Declaration of Rights to which they had consented in England, but closing with a demand for the abolition of Prelacy. Both crown and claim were accepted, and the arrival of the Scotch regiments which William had brought from Holland gave strength to the new Government. Its strength was to be roughly tested. John Graham of Claverhouse, whose cruelties in the persecution of the Western Covenanters had been rewarded by the title of Viscount Dundee, withdrew with a few troopers from Edinburgh to the Highlands, and appealed to the clans. In the Highlands nothing was known of English government or misgovernment: all that the Revolution meant to a Highlander was the restoration of the House of Argyle. The Macdonalds, the Macleans, the Camerons, were as ready to join Dundee in fighting their old oppressors, the Campbells, and the Government which upheld them, as they had been ready to join Montrose in the same cause forty years before. As William's Scotch regiments under General Mackay climbed the pass of Killiecrankie (July 27, 1689), Dundee charged them at the head of three thousand clansmen and swept them in headlong rout down the glen. But his death in the moment of victory broke the only bond which held the Highlanders together, and in a few weeks the host which had spread terror through the Lowlands melted helplessly away. In the next summer Mackay was able to build the strong post of Fort William in the very heart of the disaffected country, and his offers of money and pardon brought about the submission of the clans. Sir John Dalrymple, the Master of Stair, in whose hands the government of Scotland at this time mainly rested, had hoped that a refusal of the oath of allegiance would give grounds for a war of extermination and free Scotland for ever from its terror of the Highlanders. He had provided for the expected refusal by orders of a ruthless severity. "Your troops," he wrote to the officer in command, "will destroy entirely the country of Lochaber, Locheil's lands, Keppoch's, Glengarry's, and Glencoe's. Your powers shall be large enough. I hope the soldiers will not trouble the Government with prisoners." But his hopes were disappointed by the readiness with which the clans accepted the offers of the Government. All submitted in good time save Macdonald of Glencoe, whose pride delayed his taking of the oath till six days after the latest date fixed by the proclamation. Foiled in his larger hopes of destruction, Dalrymple seized eagerly on the pretext given by Macdonald, and an order "for the extirpation of that nest of robbers" was laid before William and received the royal signature. "The work," wrote the Master of Stair to Colonel Hamilton who undertook it, "must be secret and sudden." The troops were chosen from among the Campbells, the deadly foes of the clansmen of Glencoe, and quartered peacefully among the Macdonalds for twelve days,

Digitized by Google

till all suspicion of their errand disappeared. At daybreak (Feb. 13, 1692) they fell on their hosts, and in a few moments thirty of the clansfolk lay dead on the snow. The rest, sheltered by a storm, escaped to the mountains to perish for the most part of cold and hunger. "The only thing I regret," said the Master of Stair when the news reached him, "is that any got away." Whatever horror the Massacre of Glencoe has roused in later days, few save Dalrymple knew of it at the time. The peace of the Highlands enabled the work of reorganization to go on quietly at Edinburgh. In accepting the Claim of Right with its repudiation of Prelacy, William had in effect restored the Presbyterian Church, and its restoration was accompanied by the revival of the Westminster Confession as a standard of faith, and by the passing of an Act which abolished lay patronage. Against the Toleration Act which the King proposed, the Scotch Parliament stood firm. But the King was as firm in his purpose as the Parliament. So long as he reigned, William declared in memorable words, there should be no persecution for conscience sake. "We never could be of that mind that violence was suited to the advancing of true religion, nor do we intend that our authority shall ever be a tool to the irregular passions of any party."

**The Irish Revolt.**

It was not in Scotland, however, but in Ireland that James and Lewis hoped to arrest William's progress. As we have noticed before, James had resolved soon after his accession to make Ireland a refuge for himself and his Catholic subjects in case of mishap. As we have seen, Lord Tyrconnell had been made general, and then raised to the post of Lord Deputy, with a view to the carrying out of this purpose; the army had been remodelled, by the disbanding its Protestant soldiers and filling the ranks with Papists; a similar process had "purified" the bench of judges; the town charters had been seized into the King's hands, and Catholic Mayors and Catholic Sheriffs set at the head of every city and county. With power thus placed in the hands of their bitter enemies, the terror of a new Irish massacre spread fast among the humbled Protestants. Those of the south for the most part forsook their homes and fled over sea, while those of the north drew together at Enniskillen and Londonderry. The news of the King's fall intensified the panic. For two months Tyrconnell intrigued with William's Government, but his aim was simply to gain time, and at the opening of 1689 a flag was hoisted over Dublin Castle, with the words embroidered on its folds "Now or Never." The signal called every Catholic to arms. The maddened natives flung themselves on the plunder which their masters had left, and in a few weeks havoc was done, the French envoy told Lewis, which it would take years to repair. Meanwhile James sailed from France to Kinsale. His first work was to crush the Protestants who stood in arms in the north. Fifty thousand men

Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII.
THE GRAND ALLIANCE.
1689-1694.

had gathered to Tyrconnell's standard, and about half the number were sent against Londonderry, where the bulk of the fugitives found shelter behind a weak wall, manned by a few old guns, and destitute even of a ditch. But the seven thousand desperate Englishmen behind the wall made up for its weakness. So fierce were their sallies, so crushing the repulse of his attack, that the King's general, Hamilton, at last turned the siege into a blockade. The Protestants died of hunger in the streets, and of the fever which comes of hunger, but the cry of the town was still "No Surrender." The siege had lasted a hundred and five days, and only two days' food remained in Londonderry, when on the 28th of July an English ship broke the boom across the river, and the besiegers sullenly withdrew. Their defeat was turned into a rout by the men of Enniskillen, who struggled through a bog to charge an Irish force of double their number at Newtown Butler, and drove horse and foot before them in a panic which soon spread through Hamilton's whole army. The routed soldiers fell back on Dublin, where James lay helpless in the hands of the frenzied Catholics. In the Parliament he had summoned every member returned was an Irishman and a Papist, and its one aim was the ruin of the English settlers. The Act of Settlement, on which all title to property rested, was at once repealed. Three thousand Protestants of name and fortune were massed together in the hugest Bill of Attainder which the world has seen. In spite of the love which James professed for religious freedom, the Protestant clergy were driven from their parsonages, Fellows and scholars were turned out of Trinity College, and the French envoy, the Count of Avaux, dared even to propose a general massacre of the Protestants who still lingered in the districts which had submitted to James. To his credit the King shrank horror-struck from the proposal. "I cannot be so cruel," he said, "as to cut their throats while they live peaceably under my government." "Mercy to Protestants," was the cold reply, "is cruelty to Catholics."

**England and the Revolution.**

Through the long agony of Londonderry, through the proscription and bloodshed of the new Irish rule, William was forced to look helplessly on. The best troops in the army which had been mustered at Hounslow followed Marlborough to the Sambre; and with the political embarrassments which grew up around the Government it was unable to spare a man of those who remained. The great ends of the Revolution were indeed secured, even amidst the confusion and intrigue which we shall have to describe, by the common consent of all. On the great questions of civil liberty Whig and Tory were now at one. The Declaration of Right was turned into the Bill of Rights, and the passing of this measure in 1689 restored to the monarchy the character which it had lost under the Tudors and the Stuarts. The right of the people through its representatives to depose the King, to change

Digitized by Google

the order of succession, and to set on the throne whom they would, was now established. All claim of Divine Right, or hereditary right independent of the law, was formally put an end to by the election of William and Mary. Since their day no English sovereign has been able to advance any claim to the crown save a claim which rested on a particular clause in a particular Act of Parliament. William, Mary, and Anne, were sovereigns simply by virtue of the Bill of Rights. George the First and his successors have been sovereigns solely by virtue of the Act of Settlement. An English monarch is now as much the creature of an Act of Parliament as the pettiest tax-gatherer in his realm. A limitation of the right of succession which expressed this parliamentary origin of the sovereign's right in the strongest possible way was found in the provision "that whosoever shall hereafter come to the possession of this crown shall join in communion with the Church of England as by law established." Nor was the older character of the kingship alone restored. The older constitution returned with it. Bitter experience had taught England the need of restoring to the Parliament its absolute power over taxation. The grant of revenue for life to the last two kings had been the secret of their anti-national policy, and the first act of the new legislature was to restrict the grant of the royal revenue to a term of four years. William was bitterly galled by the provision. "The gentlemen of England trusted King James," he said, "who was an enemy of their religion and their laws, and they will not trust me, by whom their religion and their laws have been preserved." But the only change brought about in the Parliament by this burst of royal anger was a resolve henceforth to make the vote of supplies an annual one, and this resolve has been adhered to ever since. A change of almost as great importance established the control of Parliament over the army. The hatred to a standing army which had begun under Cromwell had only deepened under James; but with the continental war the existence of an army was a necessity. As yet, however, it was a force which had no legal existence. The soldier was simply an ordinary subject; there were no legal means of punishing strictly military offences or of providing for military discipline: and the assumed power of billeting soldiers in private houses had been taken away by the law. The difficulty both of Parliament and the army was met by the Mutiny Act. The powers requisite for discipline in the army were conferred by Parliament on its officers, and provision was made for the pay of the force, but both pay and disciplinary powers were granted only for a single year. The Mutiny Act, like the grant of supplies, has remained annual ever since the Revolution; and as it is impossible for the State to exist without supplies, or for the army to exist without discipline and pay, the annual assembly of Parliament has become a matter of absolute necessity, and the greatest constitutional change which our history has witnessed was



Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII.

THE GRAND ALLIANCE.

1689-1694.

thus brought about in an indirect but perfectly efficient way. The dangers which experience had lately shown lay in the Parliament itself were met with far less skill. Under Charles, England had seen a Parliament, which had been returned in a moment of reaction, maintained without fresh election for eighteen years. A Triennial Bill, which limited the duration of a Parliament to three, was passed with little opposition, but fell before the dislike and veto of William. To counteract the influence which a king might obtain by crowding the Commons with officials proved a yet harder task. A Place Bill, which excluded all persons in the employment of the State from a seat in Parliament, was defeated, and wisely defeated, in the Lords. The modern course of excluding all minor officials, but of preserving the hold of Parliament over the great officers of State by admitting them into its body, seems as yet to have occurred to nobody. It is equally strange that while vindicating its right of Parliamentary control over the public revenue and the army, the Bill of Rights should have left by its silence the control of trade to the Crown. It was only a few years later, in the discussions on the charter granted to the East India Company, that the Houses silently claimed and obtained the right of regulating English commerce.

**Toleration and the Church.**

The religious results of the Revolution were hardly less weighty than the political. In the common struggle against Catholicism, Churchman and Nonconformist had found themselves, as we have seen, strangely at one; and schemes of Comprehension became suddenly popular. But with the fall of James the union of the two bodies abruptly ceased: and the establishment of a Presbyterian Church in Scotland, together with the "rabbling" of the Episcopalian clergy in its western shires, revived the old bitterness of the clergy towards the dissidents. The Convocation rejected the scheme of the Latitudinarians for such modifications of the Prayer-book as would render possible a return of the Nonconformists, and a Comprehension Bill which was introduced into Parliament failed to pass in spite of the King's strenuous support. William's attempt to admit Dissenters to civil equality by a repeal of the Test and Corporation Act proved equally fruitless. Active persecution, however, had now become impossible, and the passing of a Toleration Act in 1689 established a complete freedom of worship. Whatever the religious effect of the failure of the Latitudinarian schemes may have been, its political effect has been of the highest value. At no time had the Church been so strong or so popular as at the Revolution, and the reconciliation of the Nonconformists would have doubled its strength. It is doubtful whether the disinclination to all political change which has characterised it during the last two hundred years would have been affected by such a change; but it is certain that the power of opposition which it has wielded would have been enormously increased. As it was, the Toleration Act established a group of

Digitized by Google

religious bodies, whose religious opposition to the Church forced them to support the measures of progress which the Church opposed. With religious forces on the one side and on the other, England has escaped the great stumbling-block in the way of nations where the cause of religion has become identified with that of political reaction. A secession from within its own ranks weakened the Church still more. The doctrine of Divine Right had a strong hold on the body of the clergy, though they had been driven from their other favourite doctrine of passive obedience, and the requirement of the oath of allegiance to the new sovereigns from all persons in public functions was resented as an intolerable wrong by almost every parson. Sancroft, the Archbishop of Canterbury, with a few prelates and a large number of the higher clergy, absolutely refused the oath, treated all who took it as schismatics, and on their deprivation by Act of Parliament regarded themselves and their adherents, who were known as Non-jurors, as the only members of the true Church of England. The bulk of the clergy bowed to necessity, but their bitterness against the new Government was fanned by the expulsion of the Non-jurors into a flame, and added to the difficulties which William had to encounter.

**The Act of Grace.**

Not the least of his difficulties arose from the temper of his Parliaments. In 1689 the Convention declared itself a Parliament. In the Commons the bulk of the members were Whigs, and their first acts were to redress the wrongs which the Whig party had suffered during the last two reigns. The attainder of Lord Russell was reversed. The judgments against Sidney, Cornish, and Alice Lisle were annulled In spite of the opinion of the judges that the sentence on Titus Oates had been against law, the Lords refused to reverse it, but even Oates received a pardon and a pension. The Whigs however wanted, not only the redress of wrongs, but the punishment of the wrong-doers. Whig and Tory had been united, indeed, by the tyranny of James; both parties had shared in the Revolution, and William had striven to prolong their union by joining the leaders of both in his first Ministry. He named the Tory Danby Lord President, made the Whig Shrewsbury Secretary of State, and gave the Privy Seal to Halifax, a trimmer between the one party and the other. But save in a moment of common oppression or common danger union was impossible. The Whigs clamoured for the punishment of Tories who had joined in the illegal acts of Charles and of James. They refused to pass the Bill of General Indemnity which William laid before them. William on the other hand was resolved that no bloodshed or proscription should follow the revolution which had placed him on the throne. His temper was averse to persecution; he had no great love for either of the battling parties; and above all he saw that internal strife would be fatal to the effective prosecution of the war. While the cares of his new throne were chaining him to England, the confederacy of which he was the guiding



Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII.
THE GRAND ALLIANCE.
1689-1694.

spirit was proving too slow and too loosely compacted to cope with the swift and resolute movements of France. The armies of Lewis had fallen back within their own borders, but only to turn fiercely at bay. The junction of the English and Dutch fleets failed to assure them the mastery of the seas. The English navy was paralysed by the corruption which prevailed in the public service, as well as by the sloth and incapacity of its commander. The services of Admiral Herbert at the Revolution had been rewarded by the earldom of Torrington and the command of the fleet; but his indolence suffered the seas to be swept by French privateers, and his want of seamanship was shown in an indecisive engagement with a French squadron in Bantry Bay. Meanwhile Lewis was straining every nerve to win the command of the Channel; the French dockyards were turning out ship after ship, and the galleys of the Mediterranean fleet were brought round to reinforce the fleet at Brest. A French victory off the English coast would have brought serious political danger, for the reaction of popular feeling which had begun in favour of James had been increased by the pressure of the war, by the taxation, by the expulsion of the Non-jurors and the discontent of the clergy, by the panic of the Tories at the spirit of vengeance which broke out among the triumphant Whigs, and above all by the presence of James in Ireland. A new party, that of the Jacobites or adherents of King James, was just forming; and it was feared that a Jacobite rising would follow the appearance of a French fleet on the coast. In such a state of affairs William judged rightly that to yield to the Whig thirst for vengeance would have been to ruin his cause. He dissolved the Parliament, issued in his own name a general pardon for all political offences, under the title of an Act of Grace, and accepted the resignations of the more violent Whigs among his counsellors. Danby was entrusted with the chief administration of affairs; for Danby had power over the Tories, and in the new Parliament which was called in 1690 the bulk of the members proved Tories. William's aim in this sudden change of front was to secure a momentary lull in English faction which would suffer him to strike at the rebellion in Ireland. While James was King in Dublin it was hopeless to crush treason at home; and so urgent was the danger, so precious every moment in the present juncture of affairs, that William could trust no one to bring the work as sharply to an end as was needful save himself.

The Battle of the Boyne.

In the autumn of the year 1689 the Duke of Schomberg had been sent with a small force to Ulster, but his landing had only roused Ireland to a fresh enthusiasm. The ranks of the Irish army were filled up at once, and James was able to face the duke at Drogheda with a force double that of his opponent. Schomberg, whose forces were all raw recruits whom it was hardly possible to trust at such odds in the field, entrenched himself at Dundalk, in a camp where

Digitized by Google

pestilence soon swept off half his men, till winter parted the two armies. During the next six months James, whose treasury was utterly exhausted, strove to fill it by a coinage of brass money, while his soldiers subsisted by sheer plunder. William meanwhile was toiling hard on the other side of the Channel to bring the war to an end. Schomberg was strengthened during the winter with men and stores, and when the spring came his force reached thirty thousand men. Lewis, too, felt the importance of the coming struggle; and seven thousand picked Frenchmen, under the Count of Lauzun, were despatched to reinforce the army of James. They had hardly arrived when William himself landed at Carrickfergus, and pushed rapidly to the south. His columns soon caught sight of the Irish army, posted strongly behind the Boyne. "I am glad to see you, gentlemen," William cried with a burst of delight; "and if you escape me now the fault will be mine." Early next morning, the First of July, 1690, 1690.
the whole English army plunged into the river. The Irish foot broke in a shameful panic, but the horse made so gallant a stand that Schomberg fell in repulsing its charge, and for a time the English centre was held in check. With the arrival of William, however, at the head of the left wing, all was over. James, who had looked helplessly on, fled to Dublin and took ship at Kinsale for France, while the capital threw open its gates to the conqueror. The cowardice of the Stuart sovereign moved the scorn even of his followers. "Change kings with us," an Irish officer replied to an Englishman who taunted him with the panic of the Boyne, "change kings with us, and we will fight you again." They did better in fighting without a king. The French, indeed, withdrew scornfully from the routed army as it stood at bay beneath the walls of Limerick. "Do you call these ramparts?" sneered Lauzun: "the English will need no cannon; they may batter them down with roasted apples." But twenty thousand men remained with Sarsfield, a brave and skilful officer who had seen service in England and abroad; and his daring surprise of the English ammunition train, his repulse of a desperate attempt to storm the town, and the approach of the winter, forced William to raise the siege. The turn of the war abroad recalled him to England, and he left his work to one who was quietly proving himself a master in the art of war. Lord Marlborough had been recalled from Flanders to command a division which had landed in the south of Ireland. Only a few days remained before winter would come to break off operations, but the few days were turned to good account. Cork, with five thousand men behind its walls, was taken in forty-eight hours. Kinsale a few days later shared the fate of Cork. Winter indeed left Connaught and the greater part of Munster in Irish hands; the French force remained untouched, and the coming of a new French general, St. Ruth, with arms and supplies, encouraged the insurgents. But the spring of 1691 1691

Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII.

THE GRAND ALLIANCE. 1689-1694.

had hardly opened when Ginkell, the new English general, by his seizure of Athlone forced on a battle with the combined French and Irish forces at Aughrim, in which St. Ruth fell on the field and his army was utterly broken. The defeat left Limerick alone in its revolt, and even Sarsfield bowed to the necessity of a surrender. Two treaties were drawn up between the Irish and English generals. By the first it was stipulated that the Catholics of Ireland should enjoy such privileges in the exercise of their religion as were consistent with law, or as they had enjoyed in the reign of Charles the Second. Both sides were, of course, well aware that such a treaty was merely waste paper, for Ginkell had no power to conclude it, nor had the Irish Lords Justices. The latter, indeed, only promised to do all they could to bring about its ratification by Parliament, and this ratification was never granted. By the military treaty, those of Sarsfield's soldiers who would were suffered to follow him to France; and ten thousand men, the whole of his force, chose exile rather than life in a land where all hope of national freedom was lost. When the wild cry of the women who stood watching their departure was hushed, the silence of death settled down upon Ireland. For a hundred years the country remained at peace, but the peace was a peace of despair. The most terrible legal tyranny under which a nation has ever groaned avenged the rising under Tyrconnell. The conquered people, in Swift's bitter words of contempt, became "hewers of wood and drawers of water" to their conquerors; but till the very eve of the French Revolution Ireland ceased to be a source of terror and anxiety to England.

**The Jacobite Plots.**

Short as the struggle of Ireland had been, it had served Lewis well, for while William was busy at the Boyne a series of brilliant successes restored the fortunes of France. In Flanders the Duke of Luxembourg won the victory of Fleurus. In Italy Marshal Catinat defeated the Duke of Savoy. A success of even greater moment, the last victory which France was fated to win at sea, placed for an instant the very throne of William in peril. William never showed a cooler courage than in quitting England to fight James in Ireland at a moment when the Jacobites were only looking for the appearance of a French fleet on the coast to rise in revolt. He was hardly on his way in fact when Tourville, the French admiral, put to sea with strict orders to fight. He was met by the English and Dutch fleet at Beachy Head, and the Dutch division at once engaged. Though utterly outnumbered, it fought stubbornly in hope of Herbert's aid; but Herbert, whether from cowardice or treason, looked idly on while his allies were crushed, and withdrew at nightfall to seek shelter in the Thames. The danger was as great as the shame, for Tourville's victory left him master of the Channel, and his presence off the coast of Devon invited the Jacobites to revolt. But whatever the discontent of Tories and

*July* 1690.

Digitized by Google

Non-jurors against William might be, all signs of it vanished with the landing of the French. The burning of Teignmouth by Tourville's sailors called the whole coast to arms; and the news of the Boyne put an end to all dreams of a rising in favour of James. The natural reaction against a cause which looked for foreign aid gave a new strength for the moment to William in England; but ill luck still hung around the Grand Alliance. So urgent was the need for his presence abroad that William left as we have seen his work in Ireland undone, and crossed in the spring of 1691 to Flanders. It was the 1691. first time since the days of Henry the Eighth that an English king had appeared on the Continent at the head of an English army. But the slowness of the allies again baffled William's hopes. He was forced to look on with a small army while a hundred thousand Frenchmen closed suddenly around Mons, the strongest fortress of the Netherlands, and made themselves master of it in the presence of Lewis. The humiliation was great, and for the moment all trust in William's fortune faded away. In England the blow was felt more heavily than elsewhere. The treason which had been crushed by the indignation at Tourville's descent woke up to a fresh life. Leading Tories, such as Lord Clarendon and Lord Dartmouth, opened communications with James; and some of the leading Whigs, with the Earl of Shrewsbury at their head, angered at what they regarded as William's ingratitude, followed them in their course. In Lord Marlborough's mind the state of affairs raised hopes of a double treason. His design was to bring about a revolt which would drive William from the throne without replacing James, and give the crown to his daughter Anne, whose affection for Marlborough's wife would place the real government of England in his hands. A yet greater danger lay in the treason of Admiral Russell, who had succeeded Torrington in command of the fleet. Russell's defection would have removed the one obstacle to a new attempt which James was resolved to make for the recovery of his throne, and which Lewis had been brought to support. In the beginning of 1692 an army of thirty 1692. thousand troops were quartered in Normandy in readiness for a descent on the English coast. Transports were provided for their passage, and Tourville was ordered to cover it with the French fleet at Brest. Though Russell had twice as many ships as his opponent, the belief in his purpose of betraying William's cause was so strong that Lewis ordered Tourville to engage the allied fleets at any disadvantage. But whatever Russell's intrigues may have meant, he was no Herbert. "Do not think I will let the French triumph over us in our own seas," he warned his Jacobite correspondents. "If I meet them I will fight them, even though King James were on board." When the two fleets met off the Norman coast his fierce attack proved Russell true to his word. Tourville's fifty vessels proved no match for

Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII.
THE GRAND ALLIANCE.
1689-1694.

the ninety ships of the allies, and after five hours of a brave struggle the French were forced to fly along the rocky coast of the Cotentin. Twenty-two of their vessels reached St. Malo; thirteen anchored with Tourville in the bays of Cherbourg and La Hogue; but their pursuers were soon upon them, and a bold attack of the English boats burnt ship after ship under the eyes of the French army. All dread of the invasion was at once at an end; and the throne of William was secured by the detection and suppression of the Jacobite conspiracy at home which the invasion was intended to support. But the overthrow of the Jacobite hopes was the least result of the victory of La Hogue. France ceased from that moment to exist as a great naval power; for though her fleet was soon recruited to its former strength, the confidence of her sailors was lost, and not even Tourville ventured again to tempt in battle the fortune of the seas. A new hope, too, broke on the Grand Alliance. The spell of French triumph was broken. The Duke of Luxembourg strove to restore the glory of the French arms by his victories over William in the two following years (1693–1694) at Steinkirk and Neerwinden; but the battles were useless butcheries, in which the conquerors lost as many men as the conquered. From that moment France felt herself disheartened and exhausted by the vastness of her efforts. The public misery was extreme. "The country," Fénelon wrote frankly to Lewis, "is a vast hospital." For the first time in his long career of prosperity Lewis bent his pride to seek peace at the sacrifice of his conquests, and though the effort was a vain one it told that the daring hopes of French ambition were at an end, and that the work of the Grand Alliance was practically done.

**The First English Ministry.**

In outer seeming, the Revolution of 1688 had only transferred the sovereignty over England from James to William and Mary. In actual fact, it was transferring the sovereignty from the King to the House of Commons. From the moment when its sole right to tax the nation was established by the Bill of Rights, and when its own resolve settled the practice of granting none but annual supplies to the Crown, the House of Commons became the supreme power in the State. It was impossible permanently to suspend its sittings, or, in the long run, to oppose its will, when either course must end in leaving the Government penniless, in breaking up the army and navy, and in rendering the public service impossible. But though the constitutional change was complete, the machinery of government was far from having adapted itself to the new conditions of political life which such a change brought about. However powerful the will of the House of Commons might be, it had no means of bringing its will directly to bear upon the conduct of public affairs. The Ministers who had charge of them were not its servants, but the servants of the Crown; it was from the King that they looked for

Digitized by Google

direction, and to the King that they held themselves responsible. By impeachment or more indirect means the Commons could force a King to remove a Minister who contradicted their will; but they had no constitutional power to replace the fallen statesman by a Minister who would carry out their will. The result was the growth of a temper in the Lower House which drove William and his Ministers to despair. It became as corrupt, as jealous of power, as fickle in its resolves, as factious in spirit, as bodies always become whose consciousness of the possession of power is untempered by a corresponding consciousness of the practical difficulties or the moral responsibilities of the power which they possess. It grumbled at the ill-success of the war, at the suffering of the merchants, at the discontent of the Churchmen; and it blamed the Crown and its Ministers for all at which it grumbled. But it was hard to find out what policy or measures it would have preferred. Its mood changed, as William bitterly complained, with every hour. It was, in fact, without the guidance of recognized leaders, without adequate information, and destitute of that organization out of which alone a definite policy can come. Nothing better proves the inborn political capacity of the English mind than that it should at once have found a simple and effective solution of such a difficulty as this. The credit of the solution belongs to a man whose political character was of the lowest type. Robert, Earl of Sunderland, had been a Minister in the later days of Charles the Second; and he had remained Minister through almost all the reign of James. He had held office at last only by compliance with the worst tyranny of his master, and by a feigned conversion to the Roman Catholic faith. But the ruin of James was no sooner certain than he had secured pardon and protection from William by the betrayal of the master to whom he had sacrificed his conscience and his honour. Since the Revolution, Sunderland had striven only to escape public observation in a country retirement, but at this crisis he came secretly forward to bring his unequalled sagacity to the aid of the King. His counsel was to recognize practically the new power of the Commons by choosing the Ministers of the Crown exclusively from among the members of the party which was strongest in the Lower House. As yet no Ministry, in the modern sense of the term, had existed. Each great officer of state, Treasurer, or Secretary, or Lord Privy Seal, had in theory been independent of his fellow-officers; each was the "King's servant" and responsible for the discharge of his special duties to the King alone. From time to time one Minister, like Clarendon, might tower above the rest and give a general direction to the whole course of government, but the predominance was merely personal and never permanent; and even in such a case there were colleagues who were ready to oppose or even impeach the statesman who overshadowed them. It was common for a King to choose or dismiss a single

Digitized by Google

SEC. VIII.
THE GRAND ALLIANCE.
1689-1694.

Minister without any communication with the rest; and so far from aiming at ministerial unity, even William had striven to reproduce in the Cabinet itself the balance of parties which prevailed outside it. Sunderland's plan aimed at replacing these independent Ministers by a homogeneous Ministry, chosen from the same party, representing the same sentiments, and bound together for common action by a sense of responsibility and loyalty to the party to which it belonged. Not only would such a plan secure a unity of administration which had been unknown till then, but it gave an organization to the House of Commons which it had never had before. The Ministers who were representatives of the majority of its members became the natural leaders of the House. Small factions were drawn together into the two great parties which supported or opposed the Ministry of the Crown. Above all it brought about in the simplest possible way the solution of the problem which had so long vexed both King and Commons. The new Ministers ceased in all but name to be the King's servants. They became simply an Executive Committee representing the will of the majority of the House of Commons, and capable of being easily set aside by it and replaced by a similar Committee whenever the balance of power shifted from one side of the House to the other.

**The Junto.**

Such was the origin of that system of representative government which has gone on from Sunderland's day to our own. But though William showed his own political genius in understanding and adopting Sunderland's plan, it was only slowly and tentatively that he ventured to carry it out in practice. In spite of the temporary reaction Sunderland believed that the balance of political power was really on the side of the Whigs. Not only were they the natural representatives of the principles of the Revolution, and the supporters of the war, but they stood far above their opponents in parliamentary and administrative talent. At their head stood a group of statesmen, whose close union in thought and action gained them the name of the Junto. Russell, as yet the most prominent of these, was the victor of La Hogue; Somers was a young advocate who had sprung into fame by his defence of the Seven Bishops; Lord Wharton was known as the most dexterous and unscrupulous of party managers; and Montague was fast making a reputation as the ablest of English financiers. In spite of such considerations, however, it is doubtful whether William would have thrown himself into the hands of a purely Whig Ministry but for the attitude which the Tories took towards the war. In spite of the exhaustion of France the war still languished and the allies still failed to win a single victory. Meanwhile English trade was all but ruined by the French privateers, and the nation stood aghast at the growth of taxation. The Tories, always cold in their support of the Grand Alliance, now became eager for peace. The Whigs, on the

1694.

Digitized by Google

other hand, remained resolute in their support of the war. William, in whose mind the contest with France was the first object, was thus driven slowly to follow Sunderland's advice. In 1695 he dissolved Parliament, and the Whig tone of the new House of Commons enabled him to replace his Tory Ministers by the members of the Junto. Russell went to the Admiralty, Somers was named Lord Keeper, Montague Chancellor of the Exchequer, Shrewsbury Secretary of State. The changes were gradually made, but they had hardly begun when their effect was felt. The House of Commons took a new tone. The Whig majority of its members, united and disciplined, moved quietly under the direction of their leaders, the new Ministers of the Crown. Great measures, financial and constitutional, passed rapidly through Parliament. The Triennial Bill became law. In spite of the efforts of the Lords, the Commons refused to renew the bill for the censorship of the press, and its liberty was no sooner thus recognized as legal (1695), than the recognition was at once followed by the appearance of a crowd of public prints. To meet the financial strain of the war Montague established the Bank of England (1694) by adopting the plan which Paterson, a Scotch adventurer, had brought forward for the creation of a National Bank. The subscribers to a loan of 1,200,000*l.* were formed into a Company, with no exclusive privileges, and restricted by law from lending money to the Crown without consent of Parliament; but so great had been the growth of the national wealth that in ten days the list of subscribers was full. A new source of power revealed itself in the discovery of the resources afforded by the national credit; and the rapid growth of the National Debt gave a new security against the return of the Stuarts, whose first work would have been the repudiation of it. With even greater courage and hardly less originality Montague faced the great difficulty of the debasement of the coinage and carried out its reform. The power of the new administration, the evidence of the public credit, gave strength to William abroad as at home. In 1695 the Alliance succeeded for the first time in winning a great triumph over France in the capture of Namur. Even in the troubled year which followed and amidst the distress created by the reform of the currency, William was able to hold the French at bay. But the war was fast drawing to a close. Lewis was simply fighting to secure more favourable terms, and William, though he held that "the only way of treating with France is with our swords in our hands," was almost as eager as Lewis for a peace which would leave him free to deal with a question which the health of the King of Spain now brought every day closer, the question of the succession to the Spanish throne. The obstacles which were thrown in the way of an accommodation by Spain and the Empire were set aside by a private negotiation between William and Lewis, and the year 1697 saw the conclusion of the Peace of

1695.

1697.

Digitized by Google

SEC. IX. MARLBOROUGH. 1698–1712.

Ryswick. In spite of failure and defeat in the field William's policy had won. The victories of France remained barren in the face of a united Europe; and her exhaustion forced her, for the first time since Richelieu's day, to consent to a disadvantageous peace. The Empire was satisfied by the withdrawal of France from every annexation, save that of Strasbourg, which she had made since the Treaty of Nimeguen. To Spain Lewis restored Luxemburg and all the conquests he had made during the war in the Netherlands. The Duke of Lorraine was replaced in his dominions. What was a far heavier humiliation to Lewis personally was his abandonment of the Stuart cause and his recognition of William as King of England. The Peace of Ryswick was thus the final and decisive defeat of the conspiracy which had gone on between Lewis and the Stuarts ever since the Treaty of Dover, the conspiracy to turn England into a Roman Catholic country and into a dependency of France.

## Section IX.—Marlborough. 1698–1712.

[*Authorities.*—Lord Macaulay's great work, which practically ends at the Peace of Ryswick, has been continued by Lord Stanhope ("History of England under Queen Anne") during this period. For Marlborough himself the main authority must be the Duke's biography by Archdeacon Coxe, with his Despatches. The French side of the war and negotiations has been carefully given by M. Martin ("Histoire de France") in what is the most accurate and judicious portion of his work. Swift's political tracts and Bolingbroke's correspondence are of great importance for the latter part of this period.]

---

**The Spanish Succession.**

What had bowed the pride of Lewis to the humiliating terms of the Peace of Ryswick was not so much the exhaustion of France as the need of preparing for a new and greater struggle. The death of the King of Spain, Charles the Second, was known to be at hand; and with him ended the male line of the Austrian princes, who for two hundred years had occupied the Spanish throne. How strangely Spain had fallen from its high estate in Europe the wars of Lewis had abundantly shown, but so vast was the extent of its empire, so enormous the resources which still remained to it, that under a vigorous ruler men believed its old power would at once return. Its sovereign was still master of some of the noblest provinces of the Old World and the New, of Spain itself, of the Milanese, of Naples and Sicily, of the Netherlands, of Southern America, of the noble islands of the Spanish Main. To add such a dominion as this to the dominion either of Lewis or of the Emperor would be to undo at a blow the work of European independence which William had wrought; and it was with a view to prevent either of these results that William

Digitized by Google

freed his hands by the Peace of Ryswick. At this moment the claimants of the Spanish succession were three: the Dauphin, a son of the Spanish King's elder sister; the Electoral Prince of Bavaria, a grandson of his younger sister; and the Emperor, who was a son of Charles's aunt. In strict law—if there had been any law really applicable to the matter—the claim of the last was the stronger of the three; for the claim of the Dauphin was barred by an express renunciation of all right to the succession at his mother's marriage with Lewis XIV., a renunciation which had been ratified at the Treaty of the Pyrenees; and a similar renunciation barred the claim of the Bavarian candidate. The claim of the Emperor was more remote in blood, but it was barred by no renunciation at all. William however was as resolute in the interests of Europe to repulse the claim of the Emperor as to repulse that of Lewis; and it was the consciousness that the Austrian succession was inevitable if the war continued and Spain remained a member of the Grand Alliance, in arms against France and leagued with the Emperor, which made him suddenly conclude the Peace of Ryswick. Had England and Holland shared William's temper he would have insisted on the succession of the Electoral Prince to the whole Spanish dominions. But both were weary of war. In England the peace was at once followed by the reduction of the army at the demand of the House of Commons to ten thousand men; and a clamour had already begun for the disbanding even of these. It was necessary to bribe the two rival claimants to a waiver of their claims, and by the First Partition Treaty, concluded in 1698, between 1698.
England, Holland, and France, the succession of the Electoral Prince was recognized on condition of the cession by Spain of its Italian possessions to his two rivals. The Milanese would thus pass to the Emperor, the Two Sicilies with the border province of Guipuscoa to France. But the arrangement was hardly concluded when the death of the Bavarian prince made the Treaty waste paper. Austria and France were left face to face, and a terrible struggle, in which the success of either would be equally fatal to the independence of Europe, seemed unavoidable. The peril was greater that the temper of England left William without the means of backing his policy by arms. The suffering which the war had caused to the merchant class and the pressure of the debt and taxation it entailed were waking every day a more bitter resentment in the people, and the general discontent avenged itself on William and the party who had backed his policy. The King's prodigal grants of crown lands to his Dutch favourites, his cold and sullen demeanour, his endeavour to maintain the standing army, robbed him of whatever popularity he still retained. The Whig Junto lost hold on the Commons. Montague was driven from his post, Somers was unscrupulously attacked, and even the boldest Whigs shrank from accepting office. William's earnest entreaty could not

Digitized by Google

SEC. IX. MARLBOROUGH. 1698-1712.

turn the Parliament from its resolve to send his Dutch guards out of the country, and to reduce the army from ten thousand men to seven. The navy, which had numbered forty thousand sailors during the war, was at the same time cut down to eight. How much William's hands were weakened by this peace-temper of England was shown by the Second Partition Treaty which was concluded in 1700 between the three powers. By this, in spite of the protests of the Emperor, who refused to join in the Treaty or to surrender his claim to the whole Spanish monarchy, Spain, the Netherlands, and the Indies were assigned to his second son the Archduke Charles of Austria. But the compensation granted to France was now increased. To the Two Sicilies was added the Duchy of Lorraine, whose Duke was transferred to the Milanese. If the Emperor still persisted in his refusal to come into the Treaty, his share was to pass to another unnamed prince, who was probably the Duke of Savoy.

1700.

**The Second Grand Alliance.**

The Emperor still protested, but his protest was of little moment so long as Lewis and the two maritime powers held firmly together. Nor was the bitter resentment of Spain of more avail. The Spaniards cared little whether a French or an Austrian prince sat on the throne of Charles the Second, but their pride revolted against the dismemberment of the monarchy by the loss of its Italian dependencies. Even the miserable King shared the anger of his subjects, and a will wrested from him by the factions which wrangled over his death-bed bequeathed the whole monarchy of Spain to a grandson of Lewis, the Duke of Anjou, the second son of the Dauphin. The Treaty of Partition was so recent, and the risk of accepting this bequest so great, that Lewis would hardly have resolved on it but for his belief that the temper of England must necessarily render William's opposition a fruitless one. Never in fact had England been so averse from war. So strong was the antipathy to William's foreign policy that men openly approved of what Lewis had done. Hardly anyone in England dreaded the succession of a boy who, French as he was, would as they believed soon be turned into a Spaniard by the natural course of events. The succession of the Duke of Anjou was generally looked upon as far better than the increase of power which France would have derived from the cessions of the last Treaty of Partition, cessions which would have turned the Mediterranean, it was said, into a French lake. "It grieves me to the heart," William wrote bitterly, "that almost everyone rejoices that France has preferred the will to the Treaty." Astonished and angered as he was at his rival's breach of faith, he had no means of punishing it. In 1701 the Duke of Anjou peaceably entered Madrid, and Lewis proudly boasted that henceforth there were no Pyrenees. The life-work of William seemed undone. He knew himself to be dying. His cough was incessant, his eyes sunk and dead, his frame so weak that he could hardly get into his coach. But never

Digitized by Google

had he shown himself so great. His courage rose with every difficulty. His temper grew cooler and more serene with every insult. His large and clear-sighted intellect looked through the temporary embarrassments of French diplomacy and English faction to the great interests which would in the end determine the course of European politics. Abroad and at home all seemed to go against him. For the moment he had no ally save Holland, for Spain was now united with Lewis, and the Elector of Bavaria, who held charge of the Spanish Netherlands and on whom William had counted, joined the French side and proclaimed the Duke of Anjou as King in Brussels. The attitude of Bavaria divided Germany and held the House of Austria in check. In 1701. England the new Parliament was crowded with Tories who were resolute against war, and William was forced in 1701 to name a Tory Ministry with Lord Godolphin at its head, which pressed him to acknowledge the new King of Spain. As even Holland did this, William was forced to submit. He could only count on France to help him, and he did not count in vain. Bitter as the strife of Whig and Tory might be in England, there were two things on which Whig and Tory were agreed. Neither would suffer France to occupy the Netherlands. Neither would endure a French attack on the Protestant succession which the Revolution of 1688 had established. But the greed of Lewis blinded him to the need of moderation in this hour of good-luck. The Spanish garrisons in the Netherlands were weak, and in the name of his grandson he introduced French troops into town after town. The English Parliament at once acquiesced in William's demand for their withdrawal; but the demand was haughtily rejected. Holland, fearful of invasion as the French troops gathered on her frontier, appealed to England for aid, and the Tory party in the Parliament saw with helpless rage that they were silently drifting into war. They impeached the leading members of the Junto for their share in the Partition Treaties; they insulted William, and delayed the supplies. But outside the House of Commons the tide of national feeling rose as the designs of Lewis grew clearer and a great French fleet gathered in the Channel. Its aim was revealed by the disclosure of a fresh Jacobite Plot, the proofs of which were laid before Parliament. Even the House of Commons took fire. The fleet was raised to thirty thousand men, the army to ten thousand, and Kent sent up a remonstrance against the factious measures by which the Tories still struggled against the King's policy, and a prayer "that addresses might be turned into Bills of Supply." William was encouraged by these signs of a change of temper to despatch an English force to Holland, and to conclude a secret treaty with Holland and the Empire for the recovery of the Netherlands from France, and of the Sicilies and Milanese from Spain. But England at large was still clinging desperately to peace, when Lewis by a sudden act forced it into

Digitized by Google

SEC. IX. MARLBOROUGH. 1698-712.

war. He had acknowledged William as King in the Peace of Ryswick, and pledged himself to oppose all attacks on his throne. He now entered the bed-chamber at St. Germains where James was breathing his last, and promised to acknowledge his son at his death as King of England, Scotland, and Ireland. The promise was in fact a declaration of war, and in a moment all England was at one in accepting the challenge. The issue Lewis had raised was no longer a matter of European politics, but the question whether the work of the Revolution should be undone, and whether Catholicism and despotism should be replaced on the throne of England by the arms of France. On such a question as this there was no difference between Tory and Whig. Not a word of protest had been uttered when the death of the last living child of the Princess Anne was followed in 1701 by the passing of an Act of Settlement which, setting aside not only the pretended Prince of Wales and a younger daughter of James the Second, but the Duchess of Savoy, a daughter of Henrietta of Orleans, and other claimants nearer in blood, as disqualified by their profession of the Catholic religion, vested the right to the crown in Sophia, Electress-Dowager of Hanover, a child of the Queen of Bohemia and a granddaughter of James the First, and the heirs of her body, being Protestants. The same national union showed itself in the King's welcome on his return from the Hague, where the conclusion of a new Grand Alliance between the Empire, Holland, and the United Provinces, had rewarded William's patience and skill. The Alliance was soon joined by Denmark, Sweden, the Palatinate, and the bulk of the German States. The Parliament which William summoned in 1702, though still Tory in the main, replied to his stirring appeal by voting forty thousand men for the war.

1702.

**Marlborough.**

But the King's weakness was already too great to allow of his taking the field; and he was forced to entrust the war in the Netherlands to the one Englishman who had shown himself capable of a great command. John Churchill, Earl of Marlborough, was born in 1650, the son of a Devonshire Cavalier, whose daughter became at the Restoration mistress of the Duke of York. The shame of Arabella did more perhaps than her father's loyalty to win for her brother a commission in the Royal Guards; and after five years' service abroad under Turenne the young captain became colonel of an English regiment which was retained in the service of France. He had already shown some of the qualities of a great soldier, an unruffled courage, a bold and venturous temper held in check by a cool and serene judgment, a vigilance and capacity for enduring fatigue which never forsook him. In later years he was known to spend a whole day in reconnoitring, and at Blenheim he remained on horseback for fifteen hours. But courage and skill in arms did less for Churchill on his return to the English court than his personal beauty. In the French camp he had

Digitized by Google

been known as "the handsome Englishman;" and his manners were as winning as his person. Even in age his address was almost irresistible: "he engrossed the graces," says Chesterfield; and his air never lost the indolent sweetness which won the favour of Lady Castlemaine. A present of £5,000 from the King's mistress laid the foundation of a fortune which grew rapidly to greatness, as the prudent forethought of the handsome young soldier hardened into the avarice of age. But it was to the Duke of York that Churchill looked for advancement, and he earned it by the fidelity with which as a member of his household he clung to the Duke's fortunes during the dark days of the Plot. He followed James to Edinburgh and the Hague, and was raised to the peerage on his return and rewarded with the colonelcy of the Royal Life Guards. The service he rendered his master after his accession by saving the Royal army from a surprise at Sedgemoor would have been yet more splendidly acknowledged but for the King's bigotry. In spite of his master's personal solicitations Churchill remained true to Protestantism. But he knew James too well to count on further favour; and no sentiment of gratitude hindered him from corresponding with the Prince of Orange, and planning a mutiny in the army gathered to oppose him which would have brought the King a prisoner into the Prince's camp. His plot broke down, but his desertion proved fatal to the Royal cause; and the service which he had rendered to William, base as it was, was too priceless to miss its reward. Churchill became Earl of Marlborough; he was put at the head of a force during the Irish war, where his rapid successes at once won William's regard; and he was given high command in the army of Flanders. But the treason which Marlborough had plotted against James was as nothing when compared to the treason which he soon plotted against William. Great as was his greed of gold, he had married Sarah Jennings, a penniless beauty of Charles's court, in whom a violent and malignant temper was strangely combined with a power of winning and retaining love. Marlborough's affection for her ran like a thread of gold through the dark web of his career. In the midst of his marches and from the very battle-field he writes to his wife with the same passionate tenderness. The composure which no danger or hatred could ruffle broke down into almost womanish depression at the thought of her coldness or at any burst of her violent humour. He never left her without a pang. "I did for a great while with a perspective glass look upon the cliffs," he once wrote to her after setting out on a campaign, "in hopes that I might have had one sight of you." It was no wonder that the woman who inspired Marlborough with a love like this bound to her the weak and feeble nature of the Princess Anne. The two friends threw off the restraints of state, and addressed each other as "Mrs. Freeman" and "Mrs. Morley." It was through the influence



Digitized by Google

SEC. IX.
MARLBOROUGH.
1698-1712.

of his wife that Churchill induced Anne to desert her father at the Revolution; and it was on the same influence that his ambition counted in its designs against William. His plan was simply to drive the King from the throne by backing the Tories in their opposition to the war as well as by stirring to frenzy the English hatred of foreigners, and to seat Anne in his place. The discovery of his designs roused the King to a burst of unusual resentment. "Were I and my Lord Marlborough private persons," William exclaimed, "the sword would have to settle between us." As it was, he could only strip the Earl of his offices and command, and drive his wife from St. James's. Anne followed her favourite, and the court of the Princess became the centre of the Tory opposition: while Marlborough opened a correspondence with James, and went far beyond his fellow-traitors in baseness by revealing to him, and through him to France, the war-projects of the English Cabinet.

**Marlborough and the Grand Alliance.**

The death of Mary forced William to recall Anne, who had now become his successor; and with Anne the Marlboroughs returned to court. The King could not bend himself to trust the Earl again; but as death drew near he saw in him the one man whose splendid talents fitted him, in spite of the baseness and treason of his life, to rule England and direct the Grand Alliance in his stead. He put Marlborough at the head of the army in Flanders, but the Earl had only just taken the command when, on the 20th of February, 1702, a fall from his horse proved fatal to the broken frame of the King. "There was a time when I should have been glad to have been delivered out of my troubles," the dying man whispered to Portland, "but I own I see another scene, and could wish to live a little longer." He knew, however, that the wish was vain, and commended Marlborough to Anne as the fittest person to lead her armies and guide her counsels. Anne's zeal needed no quickening. Three days after her accession on the 8th of March, the Earl was named Captain-General of the English forces at home and abroad, and entrusted with the entire direction of the war. His supremacy over home affairs was secured by the elevation of Lord Godolphin, a skilled financier, and a close friend of Marlborough's, to the post of Lord Treasurer. The Queen's affection for his wife ensured him the support of the Crown at a moment when Anne's personal popularity gave the Crown a new weight with the nation. In England, indeed, party feeling for the moment died away. The Tories were won over to the war now that it was waged by a Tory general, and the Whigs were ready to back even a Tory general in waging a Whig war. Abroad William's death shook the Grand Alliance to its base; and even Holland wavered in dread of being deserted by England in the coming struggle. But the decision of Marlborough soon did away with this distrust. Anne was made to declare from the throne her resolve to pursue with energy the

Digitized by Google

policy of her predecessor. The Tory Parliament was brought to sanction vigorous measures for the prosecution of the war. The new general hastened to the Hague, received the command of the Dutch as well as of the English forces, and drew the German powers into the Confederacy with a skill and adroitness which even William might have envied. Never was greatness more quickly recognized than in the case of Marlborough. In a few months he was regarded by all as the guiding spirit of the Alliance, and princes whose jealousy had worn out the patience of William yielded without a struggle to the counsels of his successor. The temper, indeed, of Marlborough fitted him in an especial way to be the head of a great confederacy. Like William, he owed little of his power to any early training. The trace of his neglected education was seen to the last in his reluctance to write. "Of all things," he said to his wife, "I do not love writing." To pen a despatch indeed was a far greater trouble to him than to plan a campaign. But nature had given him qualities which in other men spring specially from culture. His capacity for business was immense. During the next ten years he assumed the general direction of the war in Flanders and in Spain. He managed every negotiation with the courts of the allies. He watched over the shifting phases of English politics. He had to cross the Channel to win over Anne to a change in the Cabinet, or to hurry to Berlin to secure the due contingent of Electoral troops from Brandenburg. At the same moment he was reconciling the Emperor with the Protestants of Hungary, stirring the Calvinists of the Cevennes into revolt, arranging the affairs of Portugal, and providing for the protection of the Duke of Savoy. But his air showed no trace of fatigue or haste or vexation. He retained to the last the indolent grace of his youth. His natural dignity was never ruffled by an outbreak of temper. Amidst the storm of battle men saw him, "without fear of danger or in the least hurry, giving his orders with all the calmness imaginable." In the cabinet he was as cool as on the battle-field. He met with the same equable serenity the pettiness of the German princes, the phlegm of the Dutch, the ignorant opposition of his officers, the libels of his political opponents. There was a touch of irony in the simple expedients by which he sometimes solved problems which had baffled Cabinets. The King of Prussia was one of the most vexatious among the allies, but all difficulty with him ceased when Marlborough rose at a state banquet and handed to him a napkin. Churchill's composure rested partly indeed on a pride which could not stoop to bare the real self within to the eyes of meaner men. In the bitter moments before his fall he bade Godolphin burn some querulous letters which the persecution of his opponents had wrung from him. "My desire is that the world may continue in their error of thinking me a happy man, for I think it better to be envied than



Digitized by Google

SEC. IX. MARLBOROUGH. 1698-1712.

pitied." But in great measure it sprang from the purely intellectual temper of his mind. His passion for his wife was the one sentiment which tinged the colourless light in which his understanding moved. In all else he was without love or hate, he knew neither doubt nor regret. In private life he was a humane and compassionate man; but if his position required it he could betray Englishmen to death in his negotiations with St. Germains, or lead his army to a butchery such as that of Malplaquet. Of honour or the finer sentiments of mankind he knew nothing; and he turned without a shock from guiding Europe and winning great victories to heap up a matchless fortune by peculation and greed. He is perhaps the only instance of a man of real greatness who loved money for money's sake. The passions which stirred the men around him, whether noble or ignoble, were to him simply elements in an intellectual problem which had to be solved by patience. "Patience will overcome all things," he writes again and again. "As I think most things are governed by destiny, having done all things we should submit with patience."

**Marlborough and the War.**

As a statesman the high qualities of Marlborough were owned by his bitterest foes. "Over the Confederacy," says Bolingbroke, "he, a new, a private man, acquired by merit and management a more decided influence than high birth, confirmed authority, and even the crown of Great Britain, had given to King William." But great as he was in the council, he was even greater in the field. He stands alone amongst the masters of the art of war as a captain whose victories began at an age when the work of most men is done. Though he served as a young officer under Turenne and for a few months in Ireland and the Netherlands, he had held no great command till he took the field in Flanders at the age of fifty-two. He stands alone, too, in his unbroken good fortune. Voltaire notes that he never besieged a fortress which he did not take, or fought a battle which he did not win. His difficulties came not from the enemy, but from the ignorance and timidity of his own allies. He was never defeated in the field, but victory after victory was snatched from him by the incapacity of his officers or the stubbornness of the Dutch. What startled the cautious strategists of his day was the vigour and audacity of his plans. Old as he was, Marlborough's designs had from the first all the dash and boldness of youth. On taking the field in 1702 he at once resolved to force a battle in the heart of Brabant. The plan was foiled by the timidity of the Dutch deputies, but his resolute advance across the Meuse drew the French forces from that river and enabled him to reduce fortress after fortress in a series of sieges. The surrender of Liége closed a campaign which cut off the French from the Lower Rhine and freed Holland from all danger of an invasion. The successes of Marlborough had been brought into bolder relief by the fortunes of the war in other quarters. In Italy Prince Eugene of Savoy showed

Digitized by Google

his powers by a surprise of the French army at Cremona, but no real successes had been won. An English descent on the Spanish coast ended in failure. In Germany the Bavarians joined the French, and the united armies defeated the forces of the Empire. It was in this quarter that Lewis resolved to push his fortunes. In the spring of 1703 a fresh army under Marshal Villars again relieved the Elector from the pressure of the Imperial armies, and only a strife which arose between the two commanders hindered the joint armies from marching on Vienna. Meanwhile the timidity of the Dutch deputies served Lewis well in the Low Countries. Marlborough had been created Duke, and munificently rewarded for his services in the previous year, but his hopes in this second campaign were foiled by the deputies of the States-General. Serene as his temper was, it broke down before their refusal to co-operate in an attack on Antwerp and French Flanders; and the prayers of Godolphin and of the pensionary Heinsius alone induced him to withdraw his offer of resignation. But in spite of victories on the Danube, the blunders of his adversaries on the Rhine, and the sudden aid of an insurrection which broke out in Hungary, the difficulties of Lewis were hourly increasing. The accession of Savoy to the Grand Alliance threatened his armies in Italy with destruction. That of Portugal gave the allies a base of operations against Spain. His energy however rose with the pressure, and while the Duke of Berwick, a natural son of James the Second, was despatched against Portugal, three small armies closed round Savoy. The flower of the French troops joined the army of Bavaria on the Danube, for the bold plan of Lewis was to decide the fortunes of the war by a victory which would wrest peace from the Empire under the walls of Vienna.

**Blenheim.**

The master-stroke of Lewis roused Marlborough at the opening of 1704 to a master-stroke in return; but the secresy and boldness of the Duke's plans deceived both his enemies and his allies. The French army in Flanders saw in his march upon Maintz only a transfer of the war into Elsass. The Dutch were lured into suffering their troops to be drawn as far from Flanders as Coblentz by proposals of a campaign on the Moselle. It was only when Marlborough crossed the Neckar and struck through the heart of Germany for the Danube that the true aim of his operations was revealed. After struggling through the hill country of Würtemberg, he joined the Imperial army under the Prince of Baden, stormed the heights of Donauwörth, crossed the Danube and the Lech, and penetrated into the heart of Bavaria. The crisis drew the two armies which were facing one another on the Upper Rhine to the scene. The arrival of Marshal Tallard with thirty thousand French troops saved the Elector of Bavaria for the moment from the need of submission; but the junction of his opponent, Prince Eugene, with Marlborough raised the contending forces again to an

Digitized by Google

SEC. IX.

MARLBOROUGH. 1698-1712.

equality, and after a few marches the armies met on the north bank of the Danube, near the little town of Hochstädt and the village of Blindheim or Blenheim, which have given their names to the battle. In one respect the struggle which followed stands almost unrivalled in history, for the whole of the Teutonic race was represented in the strange medley of Englishmen, Dutchmen, Hanoverians, Danes, Würtembergers and Austrians who followed Marlborough and Eugene. The French and Bavarians, who numbered like their opponents some fifty thousand men, lay behind a little stream which ran through swampy ground to the Danube. The position was a strong one, for its front was covered by the swamp, its right by the Danube, its left by the hill-country in which the stream rose, and Tallard had not only entrenched himself, but was far superior to his rival in artillery. But for once Marlborough's hands were free. "I have great reason," he wrote calmly home, "to hope that everything will go well, for I have the pleasure to find all the officers willing to obey without knowing any other reason than that it is my desire, which is very different from what it was in Flanders, where I was obliged to have the consent of a council of war for everything I undertook." So formidable were the obstacles, however, that though the allies were in motion at sunrise on the 13th of August, it was not till midday that Eugene, who commanded on the right, succeeded in crossing the stream. The English foot at once forded it on the left and attacked the village of Blindheim in which the bulk of the French infantry were entrenched, but after a furious struggle the attack was repulsed, while as gallant a resistance at the other end of the line held Eugene in check. The centre, however, which the French believed to be unassailable, had been chosen by Marlborough for the chief point of attack, and by making an artificial road across the morass he was at last enabled to throw his eight thousand horsemen on the French horse which lay covered by it. Two desperate charges which the Duke headed in person decided the day. The French centre was flung back on the Danube and forced to surrender. Their left fell back in confusion on Hochstädt: their right, cooped up in Blindheim and cut off from retreat, became prisoners of war. Of the defeated army only twenty thousand escaped. Twelve thousand were slain, fourteen thousand were captured. Germany was finally freed from the French; and Marlborough, who followed the wreck of the French host in its flight to Elsass, soon made himself master of the Lower Moselle. But the loss of France could not be measured by men or fortresses. A hundred victories since Rocroi had taught the world to regard the French army as invincible, when Blenheim and the surrender of the flower of the French soldiery broke the spell. From that moment the terror of victory passed to the side of the allies, and "Malbrook" became a name of fear to every child in France.

In England itself the victory of Blenheim aided to bring about a

Digitized by Google

great change in the political aspect of affairs. With the progress of the struggle the Tory party had slowly drifted back again into its old antipathy to a "Whig war." Marlborough strove to bind them to his policy by supporting in 1702 and 1703 a bill against occasional conformity, which excluded the Nonconformists yet more rigidly from all municipal rights, and by allowing the Queen to set aside the tenths and first-fruits hitherto paid by the clergy to the Crown as a fund for the augmentation of small benefices. The fund still bears the name of Queen Anne's Bounty. But the bill against occasional conformity was steadily resisted by the Lords, and Marlborough's efforts to bend the Tory Ministers to a support of the war were every day more fruitless. The higher Tories with Lord Nottingham at their head, who had thrown every obstacle they could in the way of its continuance, at last quitted office in 1704, and Marlborough replaced them by Tories of a more moderate stamp who were still in favour of the war: by Robert Harley, who became Secretary of State, and Henry St. John, a man of splendid talents, who was named Secretary at War. The Duke's march into Germany embittered the political strife. The Tories and Jacobites threatened, if Marlborough failed, to bring his head to the block, and only the victory of Blenheim saved him from political ruin. Slowly and against his will the Duke drifted from his own party to the party which really backed his policy. He availed himself of the national triumph over Blenheim to dissolve Parliament; the elections of 1705, as he hoped, returned a majority in favour of the war, and the efforts of Marlborough brought about a coalition between the Whig Junto and the moderate Tories who still clung to him, which foiled the bitter attacks of the peace party. The support of the Whigs was purchased by making a Whig, William Cowper, Lord Keeper, and sending Lord Sunderland as Envoy to Vienna Marlborough at last felt secure at home. But he had to bear disappointment abroad. His plan of attack along the line of the Moselle was defeated by the refusal of the Imperial army to join him. When he entered the French lines across the Dyle, the Dutch generals withdrew their troops; and his proposal to attack the Duke of Villeroy in the field of Waterloo was rejected in full council of war by the deputies of the States with cries of "murder" and "massacre." Even Marlborough's composure broke into bitterness at the blow. "Had I had the same power I had last year," he wrote home, "I could have won a greater victory than that of Blenheim." On his complaint the States recalled their commissaries, but the year was lost; nor had greater results been brought about in Italy or on the Rhine. The spirits of the allies were only sustained by the romantic exploits of Lord Peterborough in Spain. Profligate, unprincipled, flighty as he was, Peterborough had a genius for war, and his seizure of Barcelona with a handful of men, his

in 1705.

Digitized by Google

SEC. IX. MARLBOROUGH. 1698-1712.

recognition of the old liberties of Arragon, roused that province to support the cause of the second son of the Emperor, who had been acknowledged as King of Spain by the allies under the title of Charles the Third. Catalonia and Valentia soon joined Arragon in declaring for Charles: while Marlborough spent the winter of 1705 in negotiations at Vienna, Berlin, Hanover, and the Hague, and in preparations for the coming campaign. Eager for freedom of action and sick of the Imperial generals as of the Dutch, he planned a march over the Alps and a campaign in Italy; and though his designs were defeated by the opposition of the allies, he found himself unfettered when he again appeared in Flanders in 1706. Villeroy was as eager as Marlborough for an engagement; and the two armies met on the 23rd of May at the village of Ramillies on the undulating plain which forms the highest ground in Brabant. The French were drawn up in a wide curve with morasses covering their front. After a feint on their left, Marlborough flung himself on their right wing at Ramillies, crushed it in a brilliant charge that he led in person, and swept along their whole line till it broke in a rout which only ended beneath the walls of Louvain. In an hour and a half the French had lost fifteen thousand men, their baggage, and their guns, and the line of the Scheldt, Brussels, Antwerp and Bruges were the prize of the victors. It only needed the four successful sieges which followed the battle of Ramillies to complete the deliverance of Flanders.

**The Union.**

The year which witnessed the victory of Ramillies remains yet more memorable as the year which witnessed the final Union of England with Scotland. As the undoing of the earlier union had been the first work of the Government of the Restoration, its revival was one of the first aims of the Government which followed the Revolution. But the project was long held in check by religious and commercial jealousies. Scotland refused to bear any part of the English debt. England would not yield any share in her monopoly of trade with the Colonies. The English Churchmen longed for a restoration of Episcopacy north of the border, while the Scotch Presbyterians would not hear even of the legal toleration of Episcopalians. In 1703, however, the Act of Settlement which passed through the Scotch Parliament at last brought home to English statesmen the dangers of further delay. In dealing with this measure the Scotch Whigs, who cared only for the independence of their country, joined hand in hand with the Scotch Jacobites, who looked only to the interests of the Pretender. The Jacobites excluded from the Act the name of the Princess Sophia; the Whigs introduced a provision that no sovereign of England should be recognized as sovereign of Scotland save upon security given to the religion, freedom, and trade of the Scottish people. Great as the danger arising from such a measure undoubtedly was, for it pointed to a recognition of the Pretender in Scotland on the

Digitized by Google

Queen's death, and such a recognition meant war between Scotland and England, it was only after three years' delay that the wisdom and resolution of Lord Somers brought the question to an issue. The Scotch proposals of a federative rather than a legislative union were set aside by his firmness; the commercial jealousies of the English traders were put by; and the Act of Union as finally passed in 1707 provided that the two kingdoms should be united into one under the name of Great Britain, and that the succession to the crown of this United Kingdom should be ruled by the provisions of the English Act of Settlement. The Scotch Church and the Scotch Law were left untouched: but all rights of trade were thrown open, and a uniform system of coinage adopted. A single Parliament was henceforth to represent the United Kingdom, and for this purpose forty-five Scotch members were added to the five hundred and thirteen English members of the House of Commons, and sixteen representative peers to the one hundred and eight who formed the English House of Lords. In Scotland the opposition was bitter and almost universal. The terror of the Presbyterians indeed was met by an Act of Security which became part of the Treaty of Union, and which required an oath to support the Presbyterian Church from every sovereign on his accession. But no securities could satisfy the enthusiastic patriots or the fanatical Cameronians. The Jacobites sought troops from France and plotted a Stuart restoration. The nationalists talked of seceding from the Assembly which voted for the Union, and of establishing a rival Parliament. In the end, however, good sense and the loyalty of the trading classes to the cause of the Protestant succession won their way. The measure was adopted by the Scotch Parliament, and the Treaty of Union became in 1707 a legislative Act to which Anne gave her assent in noble words. "I desire," said the Queen, "and expect from my subjects of both nations that from henceforth they act with all possible respect and kindness to one another, that so it may appear to all the world they have hearts disposed to become one people." Time has more than answered these hopes. The two nations whom the Union brought together have ever since remained one. England gained in the removal of a constant danger of treason and war. To Scotland the Union opened up new avenues of wealth which the energy of its people turned to wonderful account. The farms of Lothian have become models of agricultural skill. A fishing town on the Clyde has grown into the rich and populous Glasgow. Peace and culture have changed the wild clansmen of the Highlands into herdsmen and farmers. Nor was the change followed by any loss of national spirit. The world has hardly seen a mightier and more rapid development of national energy than that of Scotland after the Union. All that passed away was the jealousy which had parted since the days of Edward the First two peoples whom a common blood

Digitized by Google

SEC. IX.
MARLBOROUGH.
1698-1712.

**Marlborough and the Whigs.**

and common speech proclaimed to be one. The Union between Scotland and England has been real and stable simply because it was the legislative acknowledgment and enforcement of a national fact.

With the defeat of Ramillies the fortunes of France reached their lowest ebb. The loss of Flanders was followed by the loss of Italy after a victory by which Eugene relieved Turin; and not only did Peterborough hold his ground in Spain, but Charles the Third with an army of English and Portuguese entered Madrid. Marlborough was at the height of his renown. Ramillies gave him strength enough to force Anne, in spite of her hatred of the Whigs, to fulfil his compact with them by admitting Lord Sunderland, the bitterest leader of their party, to office. But the system of political balance which he had maintained till now was fast breaking down. Constitutionally, Marlborough's was the last attempt to govern England on other terms than those of party government, and the union of parties to which he had clung ever since his severance from the extreme Tories soon became impossible. The growing opposition of the Tories to the war threw the Duke more and more on the support of the Whigs, and the Whigs sold their support dearly. Sunderland was resolved to drive the moderate Tories from the Administration in spite of Marlborough's desire to retain them. "England," the Duke wrote hotly, "will not be ruined because a few men are not pleased," but the opposition of the Tories to the war left him helpless in the hands of the only party who steadily supported it. A factious union of the Whigs with their opponents roused Marlborough to a burst of unusual passion in Parliament, but it effected its end by convincing him of the impossibility of further resistance. The resistance of the Queen indeed was stubborn and bitter. Anne was at heart a Tory, and her old trust in Marlborough died with his acceptance of the Whig demands. It was only by the threat of resignation that he had forced her to admit Sunderland to office. The violent outbreak of temper with which the Duchess enforced her husband's will changed the Queen's friendship for her into a bitter resentment. Marlborough however was forced to increase this resentment by fresh compliances with the Whig demands, by removing Peterborough from his command as a Tory general, and by wresting from Anne her consent in 1708 to the dismissal of Harley and St. John from office, and the admission of Lord Somers and Wharton into the Ministry. Somers became President of the Council, Wharton Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and the Whig victory was complete. Meanwhile, the great struggle abroad was going on, with striking alternations of success. France rose with singular rapidity from the crushing blow of Ramillies. Spain was recovered for Philip by the victory of Marshal Berwick at Almanza. Villars won fresh triumphs on the Rhine, and Eugene, who had penetrated into Provence, was driven back into

Digitized by Google

Italy. In Flanders, the plans of Marlborough were foiled by the strategy of the Duke of Vendôme and by the reluctance of the Dutch, who were now wavering towards peace. In the campaign of 1708 however, Vendôme, though superior in force, was attacked and defeated at Oudenarde, and though Marlborough was hindered from striking at the heart of France by the timidity of the English and Dutch statesmen, he reduced Lille, the strongest of the frontier fortresses, in the face of an army of relief which numbered a hundred thousand men. The pride of Lewis was at last broken by defeat and by the terrible suffering of France. He offered terms of peace which yielded all that the allies had fought for. He consented to withdraw his aid from Philip of Spain, to give up ten Flemish fortresses to the Dutch, and to surrender to the Empire all that France had gained since the treaty of Westphalia. He offered to acknowledge Anne, to banish the Pretender from his dominions, and to demolish the fortifications of Dunkirk, a port hateful to England as the home of the French privateers.

1708.

**England and the War.**

To Marlborough peace now seemed secure, but in spite of his counsels, the allies and the Whig Ministers in England demanded that Lewis should with his own troops compel his grandson to give up the crown of Spain. "If I must wage war," replied the King, "I had rather wage it against my enemies than against my children." At the opening of the campaign of 1709 he appealed to France, and France, exhausted as it was, answered nobly to his appeal. The terrible slaughter which bears the name of the battle of Malplaquet showed a new temper in the French soldiery. Starving as they were, they flung away their rations in their eagerness for the fight, and fell back at its close in serried masses that no efforts of Marlborough could break. They had lost twelve thousand men, but they had inflicted on the allies a loss of double that number. A "deluge of blood" such as that of Malplaquet increased the growing weariness of the war, and the rejection of the French offers was unjustly attributed to a desire on the part of Marlborough of lengthening out a contest which brought him profit and power. The expulsion of Harley and St. John from the Ministry had given the Tories leaders of a more vigorous stamp, and St. John brought into play a new engine of political attack whose powers soon made themselves felt. In the *Examiner* and in a crowd of pamphlets and periodicals which followed in its train, the humour of Prior, the bitter irony of Swift, and St. John's own brilliant sophistry spent themselves on the abuse of the war and of its general. "Six millions of supplies and almost fifty millions of debt!" Swift wrote bitterly, "The High Allies have been the ruin of us!" Marlborough was ridiculed and reviled, he was accused of insolence, cruelty and ambition, of corruption and greed. Even his courage was called in question. A sudden storm of popular passion showed the way in which public opinion responded to these efforts. A High

Digitized by Google

SEC. IX. MARLBOROUGH. 1698-1712.

Church divine, Dr. Sacheverell, maintained the doctrine of non-resistance in a sermon at St. Paul's with a boldness which deserved prosecution; but in spite of the warning of Marlborough and of Somers the Whig Ministers resolved on his impeachment. His trial in 1710 at once widened into a great party struggle, and the popular enthusiasm in Sacheverell's favour showed the gathering hatred of the Whigs and the war. The most eminent of the Tory Churchmen stood by his side at the bar, crowds escorted him to the court and back again, while the streets rang with cries of "The Church and Dr. Sacheverell." A small majority of the peers found him guilty, but the light sentence they inflicted was in effect an acquittal, and bon-fires and illuminations over the whole country welcomed it as a Tory triumph.

**Fall of Marlborough.**

The turn of popular feeling freed Anne at once from the pressure beneath which she had bent: and the skill of Harley, whose cousin, Mrs. Masham, had succeeded the Duchess of Marlborough in the Queen's favour, was employed in bringing about the fall both of Marlborough and the Whig Ministers by playing the one off against the other. The Whigs, who knew the Duke's alliance with them had simply been forced on him by the war, and were persuaded that the Queen had no aim but to humble him, looked coolly on at the dismissal of his son-in-law, Sunderland, and his friend, Godolphin. Marlborough, who leaned towards a reconciliation with his old party, looked on in return while Anne dismissed the Whig Ministers in the autumn of 1710 and appointed a Tory Ministry in their place with Harley and St. John at its head. In the face of these changes, however, the Duke did not dare to encounter the risks of any decisive enterprise; and his reduction of a few sea-board towns failed to win back English feeling to the continuance of so costly a struggle. The return of a Tory House of Commons sealed his fate. His wife was dismissed from court. A masterly plan for a march into the heart of France in the opening of 1711 was foiled by the withdrawal of a part of his forces, and the negotiations which had for some time been conducted between the French and English Ministers without his knowledge marched rapidly to a close. The sense of approaching ruin forced Marlborough at last to break with the Tory Ministry, and his efforts induced the House of Lords to denounce the contemplated peace; but the support of the Commons and the Queen, and the general hatred of the war among the people, enabled Harley to ride down all resistance. At the opening of 1712 the Whig majority in the House of Lords was swamped by the creation of twelve Tory peers. Marlborough was dismissed from his command, charged with peculation, and condemned as guilty by a vote of the House of Commons. He at once withdrew from England, and with his withdrawal all opposition to the peace was at an end.

Digitized by Google

## Section X.—Walpole. 1712–1742.

[*Authorities.*—Coxe's Life of Sir Robert Walpole, Horace Walpole's Memoirs of the Reign of George II., and Lord Hervey's amusing Memoirs from the accession of George II. to the death of Queen Caroline; the political tracts, and especially the Letter to Sir William Wyndham and the Patriot King, of Bolinbroke, with the Bolinbroke Correspondence; Swift's political writings, and his Journal to Stella. Horace Walpole's Letters to Sir Horace Mann give a minute account of his father's fall. A sober and judicious account of the whole period may be found in Lord Stanhope's History of England from the Peace of Utrecht.]

**Walpole.**

The struggle of the House of Lords under Marlborough's guidance against Harley and the Peace marks the close of the constitutional revolution which had been silently going on since the Restoration of the Stuarts. The defeat of the Peers and the fall of Marlborough which followed it announced that the transfer of political power to the House of Commons was complete. The machinery by which Sunderland had enabled it to direct the actual government of the country had been strengthened by the failure of Marlborough to restore the older system of administration: and the Ministers of the Crown have remained ever since an Executive Committee whose work is to carry out the will of the majority of its members. A recognition of this great change was seen in the series of "Great Commoners" who from this time became the rulers of England. The influence of political tradition, of wealth, and of the administrative training which their position often secures them, has at all times given places in the Ministry to members of the House of Lords, and a peer has sometimes figured as its nominal head. But the more natural arrangement has been the more common one; and all the greater statesmen who have guided the fortunes of England since Harley's day have been found in the Commons. Of these Great Commoners Robert Walpole was the first. Born in 1676, he entered Parliament two years before William's death as a young Norfolk landowner of fair fortune, with the tastes and air of the class from which he sprang. His big square figure, his vulgar good-humoured face were those of a common country squire. And in Walpole the squire underlay the statesman to the last. He was ignorant of books, he "loved neither writing nor reading," and if he had a taste for art, his real love was for the table, the bottle, and the chase. He rode as hard as he drank. Even in moments of political peril, the first despatch he would open was the letter from his gamekeeper. There was the temper of the Norfolk fox-hunter in the "doggedness" which Marlborough noted as his characteristic, in the burly self-confidence which declared "If I had not been Prime Minister I should have been Archbishop of Canterbury," in the stubborn courage which conquered the awkwardness

Digitized by Google

SEC. X.
WALPOLE.
1712-1742.

of his earlier efforts to speak or met single-handed at the last the bitter attacks of a host of enemies, and above all in the genial good-humour which became with him a new force in politics. Walpole was the first Minister—it has been finely said—"who gave our government that character of lenity which it has since generally deserved." No man was ever more fiercely attacked by speakers and writers, but he brought in no "gagging Act" for the press; and though the lives of most of his assailants were in his hands through their intrigues with the Pretender, he made no use of his power over them. Where his country breeding showed itself most, however, was in the shrewd, narrow, honest character of his mind. He saw very clearly, but he could not see far, and he would not believe what he could not see. He was thoroughly straightforward and true to his own convictions, so far as they went. "Robin and I are two honest men," the Jacobite Shippen owned in later years, when contrasting him with his factious opponents: "he is for King George, and I am for King James; but those men with long cravats only desire place, either under King George or King James." He saw the value of the political results which the Revolution had won, and he carried out his "Revolution principles" with a rare fidelity through years of unquestioned power. But his prosaic good sense turned sceptically away from the poetic and passionate sides of human feeling. Appeals to the loftier or purer motives of action he laughed at as "school-boy flights." For young members who talked of public virtue or patriotism he had one good-natured answer: "You will soon come off that and grow wiser."

**The Peace of Utrecht.**

How great a part Walpole was to play no one could as yet foresee. But even under Marlborough his practical abilities had brought him to the front. At the moment when the House of Commons was recognized as supreme, Walpole showed himself its ablest debater. Commerce promised to become the main interest of England, and the merchants were already beginning to trust to his skill in finance. As a subordinate member of the Whig Ministry at the close of the war he gave signs of that administrative ability which forced his enemies to acknowledge that "he does everything with the same ease and tranquillity as if he were doing nothing." How great was the sense of his power was seen in the action of the triumphant Tories on Marlborough's fall in 1712. Walpole alone of their Whig opponents was singled out for persecution; and a groundless charge of peculation sent him for a time to the Tower. The great work of the new Tory Ministry was to bring about a peace, and by the conclusion of a separate truce with France it at last forced all the members of the Alliance save the Emperor, who required the pressure of defeat, to consent in 1713 to the Treaty of Utrecht. In this treaty the original aim of the war was silently abandoned, and the principle of the earlier Treaties of Partition adopted in its stead, but with a provision that the crowns of

Digitized by Google

France and Spain should never be united. Philip remained on the Spanish throne; Spain ceded her possessions in Italy and the Netherlands to Charles, who had now become Emperor, in satisfaction of his claims; and handed over Sicily to the Duke of Savoy. Holland regained the right of placing garrisons in the strongest towns of the Netherlands as a barrier against France. England retained her conquests of Minorca and Gibraltar, which gave her command of the Mediterranean; her resentment against the French privateers was satisfied by the dismantling of Dunkirk; and Lewis recognized the right of Anne and the Protestant succession in the House of Hanover. The failure of the Queen's health made the succession the real question of the day, and it was a question which turned all politics into faction and intrigue. The Whigs, to secure the succession of the House of Hanover by the overthrow of the Tories, defeated a Treaty of Commerce in which Bolinbroke anticipated the greatest financial triumph of William Pitt by securing freedom of trade between England and France. The Ministry, on the other hand, in their anxiety to strengthen themselves by binding the Church to their side, pushed through the Houses a Schism Act, which forbade Dissenters to act as schoolmasters and tutors. But on the question of the Succession their course was as hesitating as that of the Queen, who hated the House of Hanover and hindered the Electoral Prince from coming over to secure the rights of his grandmother Sophia by taking his seat among the peers as Duke of Cambridge, but who was too loyal to the Church to be brought into any real support of the Pretender. Harley, who had become Earl of Oxford, intrigued with both Hanover and St. Germains. St. John, however, who was raised to the peerage as Viscount Bolinbroke, saw that hesitation was no longer possible, and flung himself hotly, though secretly, into the Jacobite cause. As the crisis grew nearer, both parties prepared for civil war. In the beginning of 1714 the Whigs made ready for a rising on the Queen's death, and invited Marlborough from Flanders to head them, in the hope that his name would rally the army to their cause. Bolinbroke on the other hand ousted Harley from office, made the Jacobite Duke of Ormond Warden of the Cinque Ports, the district in which either claimant of the crown must land, and gave Scotland in charge to the Jacobite Earl of Mar. But events moved faster than his plans. On the 30th of July Anne was suddenly struck with apoplexy; and at the news the Whig Dukes of Argyll and Somerset entered the Privy Council without summons, and found their cause supported by the Duke of Shrewsbury, a member of the Tory Ministry, but an adherent of the House of Hanover. Shrewsbury was suggested by the Council and accepted by the dying Queen as Lord Treasurer. Four regiments were summoned to the capital, but the Jacobites were hopeless and unprepared, and the Elector George of Hanover, who had become heir to the throne on

Digitized by Google

SEC. X.

WALPOLE. 1712-1742.

**England and the House of Hanover.**

the death of the Princess Sophia, was proclaimed as King without opposition.

The accession of George I. in August 1714 was followed by two striking political results. Under Anne the throne had regained much of the older influence which it lost through William's unpopularity. Under the two sovereigns who followed Anne the power of the Crown lay absolutely dormant. They were strangers, to whom loyalty in its personal sense was impossible; and their character as nearly approached insignificance as it is possible for human character to approach it. Both were honest and straightforward men, who frankly accepted the irksome position of constitutional kings. But neither had any qualities which could make their honesty attractive to the people at large. The temper of the first was that of a gentleman usher; and his one care was to get money for his favourites and himself. The temper of the second was that of a drill-sergeant, who believed himself master of his realm while he repeated the lessons he had learnt from his wife and which his wife had learnt from the Minister. Their court is familiar enough in the witty memoirs of the time; but as political figures the two Georges are simply absent from our history. England was governed by the Ministers of the Crown, and throughout the whole period these were mere representatives of a single political party. "The Tory party," Bolinbroke wrote immediately after Anne's death, "is gone." It was Bolinbroke more than any other man who had ruined the Tories by diverting them from any practical part in English politics to dreams of a Stuart restoration. The discovery of the Jacobite plots which had been nursed by the late Ministers of the Queen alienated the bulk of the landed gentry, who were still loyal to the Revolution, of the clergy, who dreaded a Catholic King, and of the trading classes, who shrank from the blow to public credit which a Jacobite repudiation of the debt would bring about. The cry of the York mob at the King's accession expressed tersely the creed of the English trader; it shouted, "Liberty, Property, and No Pretender." The policy of Harley and Bolinbroke left the Whigs the only representatives of Revolution principles, of constitutional liberty and religious toleration, and when this was fairly seen, not only merchant and squire but the nation at large went with the Whigs. In the House of Commons after George the First's accession the Tory members hardly numbered fifty, and their Jacobite leanings left them powerless over English politics. The King's Ministry was wholly drawn from the Whig party, though Marlborough and the leaders of the Junto were to their surprise set aside, and the chief offices given to younger men. The direction of affairs was really entrusted to Lord Townshend, who became Secretary of State, and his brother-in-law, Walpole, who successively occupied the posts of Paymaster of the Forces, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and First Lord of the

Digitized by Google

Treasury. The Townshend Administration was the first of a series of Whig Ministries which ruled England for half a century without any serious opposition. The length of their rule was due partly no doubt to an excellent organization. While their adversaries were divided by differences of principle and without leaders of real eminence, the Whigs stood as one man on the principles of the Revolution and produced great leaders who carried them into effect. They submitted with admirable discipline to the guidance of a knot of great landed proprietors, to the houses of Bentinck, Manners, Campbell, and Cavendish, to the Fitzroys and Lennoxes, the Russells and Grenvilles, families whose resistance to the Stuarts, whose share in the Revolution, whose energy in setting the line of Hanover on the throne, gave them a claim to power which their sober use of it long maintained without dispute. They devoted themselves with immense activity to the gaining and preserving an ascendency in the House of Commons. The wealth of the Whig houses was ungrudgingly spent in securing a monopoly of the small and corrupt constituencies which formed a large part of the borough representation. Of the county members, who were the weightier and more active part of the House, nine-tenths were for a long time relatives and dependants of the Whig families. The support of the commercial classes and of the great towns was won not only by the resolute maintenance of public credit, but by the devotion of a special attention to questions of trade and finance. But dexterous as was their management and compact as was their organization, it was to nobler qualities than these that the Whigs owed their long rule over England. They were true throughout to the principles on which they had risen into power, and their unbroken administration converted those principles into national habits. Before the fifty years of their rule had passed, Englishmen had forgotten that it was possible to persecute for differences of religion, or to put down the liberty of the press, or to tamper with the administration of justice, or to rule without a Parliament. With the steadiness of a great oligarchy, the Whigs combined, no doubt, its characteristic immobility. The tone of their administration was conservative, cautious, and inactive. They were firm against any return to the past, but they shrank from any advance towards a new and more liberal future. "I am no reformer," Walpole used to say, and the years of his power are years without parallel in our history for political stagnation. But for the time this inactivity not only saved them from great dangers, but fell in with the temper of the nation at large. Their great stumbling-blocks as a party since the Revolution had been the War and the Church. But they had learnt to leave the Church alone, and their foreign policy became a policy of peace. At home their inaction was especially popular with the one class who commonly press for political activity. The energy of



Digitized by Google

SEC. X.
WALPOLE.
1712-1742.

the trading class was absorbed for the time in the rapid extension of commerce and the rapid accumulation of wealth. So long as the country was justly and constitutionally governed they were content to leave government to the hands that held it. They wished only to be let alone to enjoy their new freedom, to develop their new industries. And the Whigs let them alone. Progress became material rather than political, but the material progress of the country was such as England had never seen before.

**The Jacobite Revolt.**

The conversion of England to the Whigs was hastened by a desperate attempt of the Pretender to gain the throne. There was no real hope of success, for the Jacobites in England were few, and the Tories were broken and dispirited by the fall of their leaders. Lord Oxford was impeached and sent to the Tower; while Bolinbroke fled over-sea at the threat of impeachment, and was followed by the Duke of Ormond, the great hopè of the Jacobite party. But James Stuart was as inaccessible to reason as his father had been, and in spite of Bolinbroke's counsels he ordered the Earl of Mar to give the signal for revolt in the North. In Scotland the triumph of the Whigs meant the continuance of the House of Argyll in power, and the rival Highland clans were as ready for a blow at the Campbells under Mar as they had been ready for a blow at them under Dundee or Montrose. But Mar was a leader of different stamp from these. Six thousand Highlanders joined him at Perth, but his cowardice and want of conduct kept his army idle till Argyll had gathered forces to meet it in an indecisive engagement at Sheriffmuir. The Pretender, who arrived too late for the action, proved a yet more sluggish and incapable leader than Mar: and at the close of 1715 the advance of fresh forces drove James over-sea again, and dispersed the clans to their hills. In England, the danger passed away like a dream. A few of the Catholic gentry rose in Northumberland, under Lord Derwentwater and Mr. Forster; and the arrival of two thousand Highlanders who had been sent to join them by Mar spurred them to a march into Lancashire, where the Catholic party was strongest. But they were soon cooped up in Preston, and driven to a cowardly surrender. The leaders paid for their treason with their heads; but no serious steps were taken to put an end to the danger from the north by bringing the clans into order. The Ministry, which was reconstituted at the end of 1716 by the withdrawal of Townshend and Walpole, and now acknowledged Lord Stanhope as its head, availed itself of the Whig triumph to bring about a repeal of the Schism and Occasional Conformity Acts, and to venture with varying success on two constitutional changes. Under the Triennial Bill of William's reign the duration of a Parliament was limited to three years. Now that the House of Commons, however, was become the ruling power in the State, a change was absolutely required to secure steadiness and fixity of political action; and in 1716 the

Digitized by Google

duration of Parliament was extended to seven years by the Septennial Bill. The power which Harley's creation of twelve peers showed the Crown to possess of swamping the majority in the House of Peers prompted the Ministry in 1720 to introduce a bill, whose origin was attributed to Lord Sunderland, and which professed to secure the liberty of that House by limiting the Peerage to its present number in England and substituting twenty-five hereditary for the sixteen elected Peers from Scotland. The bill was strenuously opposed by Walpole, who had withdrawn from the Ministry on the expulsion of his friend Lord Townshend from office; and to Walpole's opposition it mainly owed its defeat. It would, in fact, have rendered representative government impossible; for representative government, as we have seen, had come to mean government by the will of the House of Commons, and had Sunderland's bill passed no power would have been left which could have forced the Peers to bow to the will of the Lower House in matters where their opinion was adverse to it.

**The Whigs and Europe.**

Abroad the Whigs aimed strictly at the maintenance of peace by a faithful adhesion to the Treaty of Utrecht. The one obstacle to peace was Spain. Its King, Philip of Anjou, had ceded the Italian possessions of his crown and renounced his own rights of succession to the throne of France, but his constant dream was to recover all he had given up. To attempt this was to defy Europe; for Austria held the late possessions of Spain in Italy, the Milanese and Naples, while France, since the death of Lewis the Fourteenth (Sept. 1715), was ruled by the Regent Duke of Orleans, who stood next under the treaty in succession to the French throne through Philip's renunciation. But the boldness of Cardinal Alberoni, who was now the Spanish Minister, accepted the risk. He began to intrigue against the Regent in France, and supported the Jacobite cause as a means of preventing the interference of England with his designs. He gained the aid of Sweden through the resentment of Charles the Twelfth at the cession to Hanover of the Swedish possessions of Bremen and Verden by the King of Denmark, who had seized them while Charles was absent in Turkey, a cession of the highest importance to the Electoral dominions, which were thus brought into contact with the sea, and of hardly less value to England, as it secured the mouths of the Elbe and the Weser, the chief inlets for British commerce into Germany, to a friendly state. But the efforts of Alberoni were foiled by the union of his opponents. His first attempt was to recover the Italian provinces which Philip had lost, and armaments greater than Spain had seen for a century reduced Sardinia in 1716, and attacked Sicily. England and France at once drew together, and were joined by Holland in a Triple Alliance, concluded in the opening of 1717, and which guaranteed the succession of the House of Hanover in England, as well as of the House of Orleans in France, should its boy



Digitized by Google

SEC. X.
WALPOLE.
1712-1742.

king, Lewis XV., die without issue. The Triple Alliance became a Quadruple Alliance in 1718 by the accession of the Emperor, whose Italian possessions the three Powers had guaranteed; and the appearance of an English squadron in the Straits of Messina was followed by an engagement in which the Spanish fleet was all but destroyed. Alberoni strove to avenge the blow by fitting out an armament which the Duke of Ormond was to command for the revival of the Jacobite rising in Scotland, but his fleet was wrecked in the Bay of Biscay; and the progress of the French armies in the north of Spain forced Philip at last to dismiss his Minister, to renew his renunciation of the French throne, and to withdraw from Sardinia and Sicily, on condition that the reversion of Parma and Tuscany should be secured to his son, the Infante Don Carlos. Sicily now passed to the Emperor, and Savoy was recompensed for its loss by the acquisition of Sardinia, from which its Duke took the title of King. At the same moment the schemes of Charles the Twelfth, who had concluded an alliance with the Czar, Peter the Great, for a restoration of the Stuarts, were brought to an end by his death at the siege of Fredericks-hall. But the ability and sense which Stanhope and his fellow Ministers showed in their foreign policy utterly failed them in dealing with the power of speculation which the sudden increase of commerce was rousing at home. The unknown wealth of South America had acted ever since the days of the Buccaneers like a spell on the imagination of Englishmen; and Harley gave countenance to a South Sea Company, which promised a reduction of the public debt as the price of a monopoly of the Spanish trade. Spain however clung jealously to her old prohibitions of all foreign commerce; the Treaty of Utrecht only won for England the right of engaging in the negro slave-trade, and of despatching a single ship to the coast; but in spite of all this, the Company again came forward, offering in exchange for new privileges to pay off national burdens which amounted to nearly a million a year. It was in vain that Walpole warned the Ministry and the country against this "dream." Both went mad; and in 1720 bubble Company followed bubble Company, till the inevitable reaction brought a general ruin in its train.

**Walpole's Peace Policy.**

The crash brought Stanhope to the grave. Of his colleagues, many were found to have received bribes from the South Sea Company to back its frauds. Craggs, the Secretary of State, died of terror at the investigation; Aislabie, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was sent to the Tower; and in the general wreck of his rivals Walpole mounted again into power. His factious conduct when out of office had been redeemed by his opposition to the Peerage Bill: his weight with the country dates from his prescient warnings against the South Sea speculation. In 1721 he again became First Lord of the Treasury, while Townshend returned to his post of Secretary of State. But there was

Digitized by Google

nothing to promise the longest tenure of power which any English Minister since the Revolution has ever enjoyed, for Walpole remained at the head of affairs for twenty-one years. But his long administration is almost without a history. All legislative and political activity abruptly ceased with his entry into office. Year after year passed by without a change. In the third year of his Ministry there was but one division in the House of Commons. The Tory members were so few that for a time they hardly cared to attend its sittings; and in 1722 the loss of Bishop Atterbury of Rochester, who was convicted of correspondence with the Pretender, deprived of his bishopric, and banished by Act of Parliament, deprived the Jacobite party of their only remaining leader. But quiet as was the air of English politics under Walpole, his policy was in the main a large and noble one. He was the first and greatest of our Peace Ministers. "The most pernicious circumstances," he said, "in which this country can be are those of war; as we must be losers while it lasts and cannot be great gainers when it ends." In spite of the complications of foreign affairs and the pressure from the Court and Opposition, he resolutely kept England at peace. It was not that the honour or influence of England suffered in Walpole's hands, for he won victories by the firmness of his policy and the skill of his negotiations as effectual as those which are won by arms. The most pressing danger to European tranquillity lay in the fact that the Emperor Charles the Sixth was without a son. He had issued a Pragmatic Sanction, by which he provided that his hereditary dominions in Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia should descend unbroken to his daughter, Maria Theresa; but the European powers had as yet declined to guarantee her succession. Spain, however, anxious as of old to recover Gibraltar and Minorca from England, and still irritated against France, offered not only to waive her own claims and guarantee the Pragmatic Sanction, but to grant the highest trading privileges in her American dominions to a commercial trading company which the Emperor had established at Ostend in defiance of the Treaty of Westphalia and the remonstrances of England and Holland, on condition that the Emperor secured the succession of Carlos, Philip's second son, to the Duchies of Parma and Tuscany. At the same time Russia, which was now governed by Catherine, the wife of Peter the Great, forced Sweden into an alliance for an attack upon Denmark, and secretly negotiated with Spain and the Emperor. Townshend met the last danger by a defensive treaty between France, England, and Prussia, which he concluded at Hanover, by a subsidy which detached Sweden from her ally, and by the despatch of a squadron into the Baltic. But the withdrawal of Prussia from the Treaty of Hanover gave fresh courage to the Emperor, and in 1727 Charles withdrew his ambassador from England, while Philip began the siege of Gibraltar. The Emperor, however was held in check by the death of the

Digitized by Google

SEC. X.
WALPOLE.
1712-1742.

Russian Empress and the firm attitude of England, France, and Holland; and Spain, finding herself too weak to wage war alone, concluded in 1729 the Treaty of Seville with the three powers. The Emperor still held aloof till 1731, when the five States united in the Treaty of Vienna, which satisfied Spain by giving the Italian Duchies to Don Carlos, while the maritime powers contented Charles by guaranteeing the Pragmatic Sanction.

**Walpole's Finance.**

Walpole was not only the first English Peace Minister; he was the first English Minister who was a great financier, and who regarded the development of national wealth and the adjustment of national burdens as the business of a statesman. His time of power was a time of great material prosperity. In 1724 the King could congratulate the country on its possession of "peace with all powers abroad, at home perfect tranquillity, plenty, and an uninterrupted enjoyment of all civil and religious rights." Population was growing fast. That of Manchester and Birmingham doubled in thirty years. The rise of manufactures was accompanied by a sudden increase of commerce, which was due mainly to the rapid development of our colonies. Liverpool, which owes its creation to the new trade with the West, sprang up from a little country town into the third port in the kingdom. With peace and security, the value of land, and with it the rental of every country gentleman, tripled; while the introduction of winter roots, of artificial grasses, of the system of a rotation of crops, changed the whole character of agriculture, and spread wealth through the farming classes. The wealth around him never made Walpole swerve from a rigid economy, from the steady reduction of the debt, or the diminution of fiscal duties. Even before the death of George the First the public burdens were reduced by twenty millions. But he had the sense to see that the wisest course a statesman can take in presence of a great increase in national industry and national wealth is to look quietly on and let it alone. What he did do however was wise, and what he strove to do was yet wiser. As early as 1720 he declared in a speech from the Throne that nothing would more conduce to the extension of commerce "than to make the exportation of our own manufactures, and the importation of the commodities used in the manufacturing of them, as practicable and easy as may be." The first act of his financial administration was to take off the duties from more than a hundred British exports, and nearly forty articles of importation. In 1730 he broke in the same enlightened spirit through the prejudice which restricted the commerce of the colonies to the mother-country alone, by allowing Georgia and the Carolinas to export their rice directly to any part of Europe. The result was that the rice of America soon drove that of Italy and Egypt from the market. His Excise Bill, defective as it was, was the first measure in which an English Minister showed any real grasp of the

Digitized by Google

principles of taxation. No tax had from the first moment of its introduction been more unpopular than the Excise. Its origin was due to Pym and the Long Parliament, who imposed duties on beer, cider, and perry, which at the Restoration produced an annual income of more than six hundred thousand pounds. The war with France brought with it the malt-tax and additional duties on spirits, wine, tobacco, and other articles. So great had been the increase in the public wealth that the return from the Excise amounted at the death of George the First to nearly two millions and a half a year. But its unpopularity remained unabated, and even philosophers like Locke contended that the whole public revenue should be drawn from direct taxes upon the land. Walpole, on the other hand, saw in the growth of indirect taxation a means of freeing the land from all burdens whatever. Smuggling and fraud diminished the revenue by immense sums. The loss on tobacco alone amounted to a third of the whole duty. The Excise Bill of 1733 met this evil by the establishment of bonded warehouses, and by the collection of the duties from the inland dealers in the form of Excise and not of Customs. The first measure would have made London a free port, and doubled English trade. The second would have so largely increased the revenue, without any loss to the consumer, as to enable Walpole to repeal the land-tax. In the case of tea and coffee alone, the change in the mode of levying the duty brought in an additional hundred thousand pounds a year. The necessaries of life and the raw materials of manufacture were in Walpole's plan to remain absolutely untaxed. Every part of Walpole's scheme has since been carried into effect; but in 1733 he stood before his time. An agitation of unprecedented violence forced him to withdraw the bill.

**Walpole and the Parliament.**

But if Walpole's aims were wise and statesmanlike, he was unscrupulous in the means by which he realized them. Personally he was free from corruption; and he is perhaps the first great English statesman who left office poorer than when he entered it. But he was certainly the first who made parliamentary corruption a regular part of his system of government. Corruption was older than Walpole, for it sprang out of the very transfer of power to the House of Commons which had begun with the Restoration. The transfer was complete, and the House was supreme in the State; but while freeing itself from the control of the Crown, it was as yet only imperfectly responsible to the people. It was only at election time that a member felt the pressure of public opinion. The secresy of parliamentary proceedings, which had been needful as a safeguard against royal interference with debate, served as a safeguard against interference on the part of constituencies. This strange union of immense power with absolute freedom from responsibility brought about its natural results in the bulk of members. A vote was too valuable to be given without recompense. Parliamentary

Digitized by Google

SEC. X.
WALPOLE.
1712-1742.

support had to be bought by places, pensions, and bribes in hard cash. Walpole was probably less corrupt than Danby who preceded or the Pelhams who followed him, but he was far more cynical in his avowal of corruption. Even if he was falsely credited with the saying that "every man has his price," he was always ready to pay the price of any man who was worth having. And he was driven to employ corruption lavishly by the very character of his rule. In the absence of a strong opposition and of great impulses to enthusiasm a party breaks readily into factions; and the weakness of the Tories joined with the stagnation of public affairs to beget faction among the Whigs. Walpole, too, was jealous of power: and as his jealousy drove colleague after colleague out of office, they became leaders of a party of so-called "Patriots" whose whole end was to drive the Minister from his post. This Whig faction, which was headed by Pulteney and Lord Chesterfield, soon rallied to it the fragment of the Tory party which remained, and which was now guided by the virulent ability of Bolinbroke, whom Walpole had suffered to return from exile, but to whom he had refused the restoration of his seat in the House of Lords.

**Walpole and Queen Caroline.**

Through the reign of George the First these "Patriots" increased in numbers, and at the accession of his son George the Second in 1727 they counted on their enemy's fall; for the new King hated his father and his father's counsellors, and had spoken of Walpole as "a rogue." But jealous of authority as he was, George the Second was absolutely guided by the adroitness of his wife, Caroline of Anspach, and Caroline had resolved that there should be no change in the Ministry. The ten years which followed were in fact the years during which Walpole's power was at its highest. The Jacobites refused to stir. The Church was quiet. The Dissenters pressed for a repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, but Walpole was resolved not to rouse passions of religious hate which only slumbered, and satisfied them by an annual Act of Indemnity for any breach of these penal statutes. A few trade measures and social reforms crept quietly through the Houses. An inquiry into the state of the gaols showed that social thought was not utterly dead. A bill of great value enacted that all proceedings in courts of justice should henceforth be in the English language. Walpole's chief effort at financial reform, the Excise Bill of 1733, was foiled as we have seen by the factious ignorance of the "Patriots." The violence of his opponents was backed by an outburst of popular prejudice; riots almost grew into revolt; and in spite of the Queen's wish to put down resistance by force, Walpole withdrew the bill. "I will not be the minister," he said with noble self-command, "to enforce taxes at the expense of blood." He showed equal wisdom and courage in the difficulties which again rose abroad. In 1733 the peace of Europe was broken afresh by disputes which rose out of a contested election to the throne of Poland. The

Digitized by Google

King was eager to fight, and even Caroline's German sympathies inclined her to join in the fray; but Walpole stood firm for the observance of neutrality. "There are fifty thousand men slain this year in Europe," he was able to say as the war went on, "and not one Englishman." The intervention of England and Holland succeeded in 1736 in restoring peace at the cost of the cession of Naples to Don Carlos and of Lorraine to France.

**The Spanish War.**

Walpole's defeat on the Excise Bill had done little to shake his power, and Bolinbroke withdrew to France in despair at the failure of his efforts. But the Queen's death in 1737, and the violent support which the Prince of Wales gave the "Patriots" from hatred to his father, were more serious blows. The country, too, wearied at last of its monotonous prosperity and of its monotonous peace. It was hard to keep from war in the Southern Seas. The merchant class were determined to carry on their trade with Spanish America, a trade which rested indeed on no legal right, but had grown largely through the connivance of the Spanish officers during the long alliance with England from 1670 to the War of Succession. But the accession of a French prince to the Spanish throne had brought about a cessation of this connivance. Philip of Anjou was hostile to English trade with his American dominions; and the efforts of Spain to preserve its own monopoly, to put down the vast system of smuggling which rendered it valueless, and to restrict English commerce to the negro slave-trade and the single ship stipulated by the Treaty of Utrecht, brought about collisions which made it hard to keep the peace. Walpole, who strove to do justice to both parties in the matter, was abused as "the cur-dog of England and spaniel of France." The ill-humour of the trading classes rose to madness in 1738 when a merchant captain named Jenkins told at the bar of the House of Commons the tale of his torture by the Spaniards, and produced an ear which he said they had cut off with taunts at the English king. It was in vain that Walpole battled stubbornly against the cry for war. His negotiations were foiled by the frenzy of the one country and the pride of the other. He stood alone in his desire for peace. His peace policy rested on the alliance with Holland and France; but the temporary hostility excited by the disputes over the succession between Philip and the House of Orleans had passed away with the birth of children to Lewis the Fifteenth, and the Bourbon Courts were again united by family sympathies. He foresaw therefore that a Spanish war would probably bring with it the rupture of the French alliance at the very moment when the approaching death of the Emperor made the union of the western powers essential to the peace of Europe. Against a war which undid all that he had laboured for twenty years to do Walpole struggled hard. But the instinct of the nation was in fact wiser than the policy of the Minister. Although neither Eng-

Digitized by Google

SEC. X.
WALPOLE.
1712-1742.

land nor Walpole knew it, a Family Compact had been concluded between France and Spain as long before as 1733, on the outbreak of the war of the Polish Succession, for the ruin of the maritime supremacy of England. Spain bound herself to deprive England gradually of her commercial privileges in America, and to transfer her trade to France. France in return engaged to support Spain at sea and to aid her in the recovery of Gibraltar. The caution with which Walpole held aloof from the Polish war rendered the Compact inoperative at the time, but neither country ceased to look forward to its future execution. France since the peace had strained every nerve to prepare a fleet; while Spain had steadily increased the restrictions on British commerce. Both were in fact watching for the opportunity of war which the Emperor's death was sure to afford, and in forcing on the struggle England only anticipated a danger which she could not escape.

**Fall of Walpole.**

The Compact however, though suspected, was still unknown, and the perils of a contest with Spain were clear enough to justify Walpole in struggling hard for peace. But he struggled single-handed. His greed of power had mastered his strong common sense; Lord Townshend had been driven from office in 1730, Lord Chesterfield dismissed in 1733; and though he started with the ablest administration ever known, Walpole was left after twenty years of administration with but a single man of ability, the Chancellor, Lord Hardwicke, in his cabinet. The colleagues whom, one by one, his jealousy had dismissed had plunged, with the exception of Townshend, into an opposition more factious and unprincipled than had ever disgraced English politics; and these "Patriots" were now reinforced by a band of younger Whigs—the "Boys," as Walpole called them—whose temper revolted alike against the peace and corruption of his policy, and at whose head stood a young cornet of horse, William Pitt. Baffled as this opposition had been for so many years, the sudden rush of popular passion gave it a new strength, and in 1739 Walpole bowed to its will in declaring war. "They may ring their bells now," the Minister said bitterly, as peals and bonfires welcomed his defeat, "but they will soon be wringing their hands." His foresight was quickly justified. No sooner had Admiral Vernon with an English fleet bombarded and taken Portobello than France refused to suffer England to settle on the mainland of South America, and despatched two squadrons to the West Indies. At this crisis the death of Charles the Sixth (Oct. 1740) forced on the European struggle which Walpole had dreaded. France saw in this event and the disunion which it at once brought about an opportunity of finishing the work begun by Henry the Second, and which Richelieu, Lewis the Fourteenth, and Cardinal Fleury had carried on—the work of breaking up the Empire into a group of powers too weak to resist French ambition. In union therefore

Digitized by Google

with Spain, which aimed at the annexation of the Milanese, and the King of Prussia, Frederick the Second, who at once occupied Silesia, France backed the Elector of Bavaria in his claim on the Duchy of Austria, which passed with the other hereditary dominions, by the Pragmatic Sanction, to the Queen of Hungary, Maria Theresa. Sweden and Sardinia allied themselves to France. England alone showed herself true to her guaranty of the Austrian Succession. In the summer of 1741 two French armies entered Germany, and the Elector of Bavaria appeared unopposed before Vienna. Never had the House of Austria stood in such utter peril. Its opponents counted on a division of its dominions. France claimed the Netherlands, Spain the Milanese, Bavaria the kingdom of Bohemia, Frederick the Second Silesia. Hungary and the Duchy of Austria alone were to be left to Maria Theresa. Even England, though still true to her cause, advised her to purchase Frederick's aid by the cession of Silesia. But the Queen refused to despair. She won the support of Hungary by restoring its constitutional rights; and the subsidies of England enabled her to march at the head of a Hungarian army to the rescue of Vienna, to overrun Bavaria, and repulse an attack of Frederick on Moravia in the spring of 1742. But on England's part the contest went on feebly and ineffectively. Admiral Vernon was beaten before Carthagena; and Walpole was charged with thwarting and starving the war. He still repelled the attacks of the "Patriots" with wonderful spirit; but in a new Parliament his majority dropped to sixteen, and in his own cabinet he became almost powerless. The buoyant temper which had carried him through so many storms broke down at last. "He who was asleep as soon as his head touched the pillow," writes his son, "now never sleeps above an hour without waking: and he who at dinner always forgot his own anxieties, and was more gay and thoughtless than all the company, now sits without speaking, and with his eyes fixed for an hour together." The end was in fact near; and the dwindling of his majority to three forced Walpole in the opening of 1742 to resign.

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.

WILLIAM PITT.
1742-1762.

# CHAPTER X.

## MODERN ENGLAND.

### Section I.—William Pitt. 1742—1762.

[*Authorities.*—Lord Stanhope and Horace Walpole, as before. Southey's biography, or the more elaborate life by Mr. Tyerman, gives an account of Wesley and the movement he headed. For Pitt himself, the Chatham correspondence, his life by Thackeray, and Lord Macaulay's two essays on him. The Annual Register begins with 1758, its earlier portion has been attributed to Burke. Carlyle's "Frederick the Great" gives a picturesque account of the Seven Years' War and of England's share in it. For Clive, see the biography by Sir John Malcolm, and Lord Macaulay's well-known essay.]

**The Church and the Georges.**

THE fall of Walpole revealed a change in the temper of England which was to influence from that time to this its social and political history. New forces, new cravings, new aims, which had been silently gathering beneath the crust of inaction, burst suddenly into view. The first of these embodied itself in the religious and philanthropic movement which bears the name of Wesley. Never had religion seemed at a lower ebb. The progress of free inquiry, the aversion from theological strife which had been left by the Civil War, the new intellectual and material channels opened to human energy, had produced a general indifference to the great questions of religious speculation which occupied an earlier age. The Church, predominant as its influence seemed at the close of the Revolution, had sunk into political insignificance. By a suspension of the sittings of Convocation Walpole deprived the clergy of their chief means of agitation, while he carefully abstained from all measures which could arouse the prejudices of their flocks. The bishops, who were exclusively chosen from among the small number of Whig ecclesiastics, were rendered powerless by the Toryism and estrangement of their clergy, while the clergy themselves stood apart from all active interference in public affairs. Nor was their political repose compensated by any religious activity. A large number of prelates were mere Whig partizans with no higher aim than that of promotion. The levees of the Ministers were crowded with lawn sleeves. A Welsh bishop avowed that he had seen his diocese but once, and habitually resided at the lakes of Westmoreland. The system of pluralities turned the wealthier and more learned of the priesthood into absentees, while the

Digitized by Google

bulk of them were indolent, poor, and without social consideration. A shrewd, if prejudiced, observer brands the English clergy of the day as the most lifeless in Europe, "the most remiss of their labours in private, and the least severe in their lives." The decay of the great dissenting bodies went hand in hand with that of the Church, and during the early part of the century the Nonconformists declined in number as in energy. But it would be rash to conclude from this outer ecclesiastical paralysis that the religious sentiment was dead in the people at large. There was, no doubt, a revolt against religion and against churches in both the extremes of English society. In the higher circles "everyone laughs," said Montesquieu on his visit to England, "if one talks of religion." Of the prominent statesmen of the time the greater part were unbelievers in any form of Christianity, and distinguished for the grossness and immorality of their lives. Drunkenness and foul talk were thought no discredit to Walpole. A later prime minister, the Duke of Grafton, was in the habit of appearing with his mistress at the play. Purity and fidelity to the marriage vow were sneered out of fashion; and Lord Chesterfield, in his letters to his son, instructs him in the art of seduction as part of a polite education. At the other end of the social scale lay the masses of the poor. They were ignorant and brutal to a degree which it is hard to conceive, for the vast increase of population which followed on the growth of towns and the development of manufactures had been met by no effort for their religious or educational improvement. Not a new parish had been created. Hardly a single new church had been built. Schools there were none, save the grammar schools of Edward and Elizabeth. The rural peasantry, who were fast being reduced to pauperism by the abuse of the poor-laws, were left without moral or religious training of any sort. "We saw but one Bible in the parish of Cheddar," said Hannah More at a far later time, "and that was used to prop a flower-pot." Within the towns things were worse. There was no effective police; and in great outbreaks the mob of London or Birmingham burnt houses, flung open prisons, and sacked and pillaged at their will. The criminal class gathered boldness and numbers in the face of ruthless laws which only testified to the terror of society, laws which made it a capital crime to cut down a cherry tree, and which strung up twenty young thieves of a morning in front of Newgate; while the introduction of gin gave a new impetus to drunkenness. In the streets of London gin-shops invited every passer-by to get drunk for a penny, or dead drunk for twopence.

**The Religious Revival.**

In spite however of scenes such as this, England as a whole remained at heart religious. Even the apathy of the clergy was mingled with a new spirit of charity and good sense, a tendency to subordinate ecclesiastical differences to the thought of a common Christianity, and to substitute a rational theology for the worn-out

Digitized by Google

traditions of the past. In the middle class the old piety lived on unchanged, and it was from this class that a religious revival burst forth at the close of Walpole's ministry, which changed in a few years the whole temper of English society. The Church was restored to life and activity. Religion carried to the hearts of the poor a fresh spirit of moral zeal, while it purified our literature and our manners. A new philanthropy reformed our prisons, infused clemency and wisdom into our penal laws, abolished the slave trade, and gave the first impulse to popular education. The revival began in a small knot of Oxford students, whose revolt against the religious deadness of their times showed itself in ascetic observances, an enthusiastic devotion, and a methodical regularity of life which gained them the nickname of "Methodists." Three figures detached themselves from the group as soon as, on its transfer to London in 1738, it attracted public attention by the fervour and even extravagance of its piety; and each found his special work in the great task to which the instinct of the new movement led it from the first, that of carrying religion and morality to the vast masses of population which lay concentrated in the towns or around the mines and collieries of Cornwall and the north. Whitfield, a servitor of Pembroke College, was above all the preacher of the revival. Speech was governing English politics; and the religious power of speech was shown when a dread of "enthusiasm" closed against the new apostles the pulpits of the Established Church, and forced them to preach in the fields. Their voice was soon heard in the wildest and most barbarous corners of the land, among the bleak moors of Northumberland, or in the dens of London, or in the long galleries where the Cornish miner hears in the pauses of his labour the sobbing of the sea. Whitfield's preaching was such as England had never heard before, theatrical, extravagant, often commonplace, but hushing all criticism by its intense reality, its earnestness of belief, its deep tremulous sympathy with the sin and sorrow of mankind. It was no common enthusiast who could wring gold from the close-fisted Franklin and admiration from the fastidious Horace Walpole, or who could look down from the top of a green knoll at Kingswood on twenty thousand colliers, grimy from the Bristol coal-pits, and see as he preached the tears "making white channels down their blackened cheeks." On the rough and ignorant masses to whom they spoke the effect of Whitfield and his fellow Methodists was terrible both for good and ill. Their preaching stirred a passionate hatred in their opponents. Their lives were often in danger, they were mobbed, they were ducked, they were stoned, they were smothered with filth. But the enthusiasm they aroused was equally passionate. Women fell down in convulsions; strong men were smitten suddenly to the earth; the preacher was interrupted by bursts of hysteric laughter or of hysteric sobbing. All the phenomena of strong spiritual

Digitized by Google

excitement, so familiar now, but at that time strange and unknown, followed on their sermons; and the terrible sense of a conviction of sin, a new dread of hell, a new hope of heaven, took forms at once grotesque and sublime. Charles Wesley, a Christ Church student, came to add sweetness to this sudden and startling light. He was the "sweet singer" of the movement. His hymns expressed the fiery conviction of its converts in lines so chaste and beautiful that its more extravagant features disappeared. The wild throes of hysteric enthusiasm passed into a passion for hymn-singing, and a new musical impulse was aroused in the people which gradually changed the face of public devotion throughout England.

**John Wesley.**

But it was his elder brother, John Wesley, who embodied in himself not this or that side of the vast movement, but the very movement itself. Even at Oxford, where he resided as a fellow of Lincoln, he had been looked upon as head of the group of Methodists, and after his return from a quixotic mission to the Indians of Georgia he again took the lead of the little society, which had removed in the interval to London. In power as a preacher he stood next to Whitfield; as a hymn-writer he stood second to his brother Charles. But while combining in some degree the excellences of either, he possessed qualities in which both were utterly deficient; an indefatigable industry, a cool judgment, a command over others, a faculty of organization, a singular union of patience and moderation with an imperious ambition, which marked him as a ruler of men. He had, besides, a learning and skill in writing which no other of the Methodists possessed; he was older than any of his colleagues at the start of the movement, and he outlived them all. His life indeed from 1703 to 1791 almost covers the century, and the Methodist body had passed through every phase of its history before he sank into the grave at the age of eighty-eight. It would have been impossible for Wesley to have wielded the power he did had he not shared the follies and extravagance as well as the enthusiasm of his disciples. Throughout his life his asceticism was that of a monk. At times he lived on bread only, and often slept on the bare boards. He lived in a world of wonders and divine interpositions. It was a miracle if the rain stopped and allowed him to set forward on a journey. It was a judgment of Heaven if a hailstorm burst over a town which had been deaf to his preaching. One day, he tells us, when he was tired and his horse fell lame, "I thought—cannot God heal either man or beast by any means or without any?—immediately my headache ceased and my horse's lameness in the same instant." With a still more childish fanaticism he guided his conduct, whether in ordinary events or in the great crises of his life, by drawing lots or watching the particular texts at which his Bible opened. But with all this extravagance and superstition, Wesley's mind was essentially

Digitized by Google

practical, orderly, and conservative. No man ever stood at the head of a great revolution whose temper was so anti-revolutionary. In his earlier days the bishops had been forced to rebuke him for the narrowness and intolerance of his churchmanship. When Whitfield began his sermons in the fields, Wesley "could not at first reconcile himself to that strange way." He condemned and fought against the admission of laymen as preachers till he found himself left with none but laymen to preach. To the last he clung passionately to the Church of England, and looked on the body he had formed as but a lay society in full communion with it. He broke with the Moravians, who had been the earliest friends of the new movement, when they endangered its safe conduct by their contempt of religious forms. He broke with Whitfield when the great preacher plunged into an extravagant Calvinism. But the same practical temper of mind which led him to reject what was unmeasured, and to be the last to adopt what was new, enabled him at once to grasp and organize the novelties he adopted. He became himself the most unwearied of field preachers, and his journal for half a century is little more than a record of fresh journeys and fresh sermons. When once driven to employ lay helpers in his ministry he made their work a new and attractive feature in his system. His earlier asceticism only lingered in a dread of social enjoyments and an aversion from the gayer and sunnier side of life which links the Methodist movement with that of the Puritans. As the fervour of his superstition died down into the calm of age, his cool common sense discouraged in his followers the enthusiastic outbursts which marked the opening of the revival. His powers were bent to the building up of a great religious society which might give to the new enthusiasm a lasting and practical form. The Methodists were grouped into classes, gathered in love-feasts, purified by the expulsion of unworthy members, and furnished with an alternation of settled ministers and wandering preachers; while the whole body was placed under the absolute government of a Conference of ministers. But so long as he lived the direction of the new religious society remained with Wesley alone. "If by arbitrary power," he replied with a charming simplicity to objectors, "you mean a power which I exercise simply without any colleagues therein, this is certainly true, but I see no hurt in it."

**The new Philanthropy.**

The great body which he thus founded—a body which numbered a hundred thousand members at his death, and which now counts its members in England and America by millions—bears the stamp of Wesley in more than its name. Of all Protestant Churches it is the most rigid in its organization and the most despotic in its government. But the Methodists themselves were the least result of the Methodist revival. Its action upon the Church broke the lethargy of the clergy, and the "Evangelical" movement, which found representatives like

Digitized by Google

Newton and Cecil within the pale of the Establishment, made the fox-hunting parson and the absentee rector at last impossible. In Walpole's day the English clergy were the idlest and most lifeless in the world. In our own time no body of religious ministers surpasses them in piety, in philanthropic energy, or in popular regard. In the nation at large appeared a new moral enthusiasm which, rigid and pedantic as it often seemed, was still healthy in its social tone, and whose power was seen in the disappearance of the profligacy which had disgraced the upper classes, and the foulness which had infested literature, ever since the Restoration. But the noblest result of the religious revival was the steady attempt, which has never ceased from that day to this, to remedy the guilt, the ignorance, the physical suffering, the social degradation of the profligate and the poor. It was not till the Wesleyan movement had done its work that the philanthropic movement began. The Sunday Schools established by Mr. Raikes of Gloucester at the close of the century were the beginnings of popular education. By writings and by her own personal example Hannah More drew the sympathy of England to the poverty and crime of the agricultural labourer. The passionate impulse of human sympathy with the wronged and afflicted raised hospitals, endowed charities, built churches, sent missionaries to the heathen, supported Burke in his plea for the Hindoo, and Clarkson and Wilberforce in their crusade against the iniquity of the slave-trade. It is only the moral chivalry of his labours that amongst a crowd of philanthropists draws us most, perhaps, to the work and character of John Howard. The sympathy which all were feeling for the sufferings of mankind he felt for the sufferings of the worst and most hapless of men. With wonderful ardour and perseverance he devoted himself to the cause of the debtor, the felon, and the murderer. His appointment to the office of High Sheriff of Bedfordshire drew his attention in 1774 to the state of the prisons which were placed in his care; and from that time the quiet country gentleman, whose only occupation had been reading his Bible and studying his thermometer, became the most energetic and zealous of reformers. Before a year was over he had personally visited almost every English gaol, and he found in nearly all of them frightful abuses which had been noticed half a century before, but left unredressed by Parliament. Gaolers, who bought their places, were paid by fees, and suffered to extort what they could. Even when acquitted men were dragged back to their cells for want of funds to discharge the sums they owed to their keepers. Debtors and felons were huddled together in the prisons, which Howard found crowded by the cruel legislation of the day. No separation was preserved between different sexes, no criminal discipline enforced. Every gaol was a chaos of cruelty and the foulest immorality, from which the prisoner could only escape by sheer starvation or by the gaol-fever that festered without



Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
WILLIAM PITT.
1742-1762.

ceasing in these haunts of wretchedness. He saw everything with his own eyes, he tested every suffering by his own experience. In one gaol he found a cell so narrow and noisome that the poor wretch who inhabited it begged as a mercy for hanging. Howard shut himself up in the cell and bore its darkness and foulness till nature could bear no more. But it was by work of this sort, and by the faithful pictures of such scenes which it enabled him to give, that he brought about their reform. The work in which he recorded his terrible experience, and the plans which he submitted for the reformation of criminals, make him the father, so far as England is concerned, of prison discipline. But his labours were far from being confined to England. In journey after journey he visited the prisons of Holland and Germany, till his longing to discover some means of checking the fatal progress of the Plague led him to examine the lazarettos of Europe and the East. He was still engaged in this work of charity when he was seized by a malignant fever at Cherson in Southern Russia, and "laid quietly in the earth," as he desired.

**The Pelhams.**

While the revival of the Wesleys was stirring the very heart of England, its political stagnation was unbroken. The triumph of Walpole's opponents ended with their victory. Retiring to the Peers as Earl of Orford, he devoted himself to breaking up the opposition and restoring the union of the Whigs, while he remained the confidential counsellor of the King. Pulteney accepted the Earldom of Bath and at once lost much of his political weight, while his more prominent followers were admitted to office. But when on the death of their nominal leader, Lord Wilmington, Pulteney claimed the post of First Minister in 1743, Walpole quietly interfered and induced the King to raise Henry Pelham, the brother of the Duke of Newcastle, and one of his own most faithful adherents, to the head of the administration. The temper of Henry Pelham, as well as a consciousness of his own mediocrity, disposed him to a policy of conciliation which reunited the Whigs, and included every man of ability in his new Ministry. The union of the party was aided by the reappearance of a danger which seemed to have passed away. The foreign policy of Walpole triumphed at the moment of his fall. The pressure of England, aided by a victory of Frederick at Chotusitz, forced Maria Theresa to consent to a peace with Prussia on the terms of the cession of Silesia; and this peace enabled the Austrian army to drive the French from Bohemia at the close of 1742. Meanwhile one English fleet blockaded Cadiz, another anchored in the bay of Naples and forced Don Carlos by a threat of bombarding his capital to conclude a treaty of neutrality, while English subsidies detached Sardinia from the French alliance. But at this point the loss of Walpole made itself felt. The foreign policy of the weak Ministry which succeeded him was chiefly directed by Lord Carteret; and Carteret, who, like the

Digitized by Google

bulk of the Whig party, had long been opposed in heart to Walpole's system, resolved to change the whole character of the war. While Walpole limited his efforts to the preservation of the House of Austria as a European power, Carteret joined Maria Theresa in aiming at the ruin of the House of Bourbon. In the dreams of the statesmen of Vienna, the whole face of Europe was to be changed. Naples and Sicily were to be taken back from Spain, Elsass and Lorraine from France; and the Imperial dignity which had passed to the Elector of Bavaria, the Emperor Charles VII., was to be restored to the Austrian House. To carry out these schemes an Austrian army drove the Emperor from Bavaria in the spring of 1743; while George the Second, who warmly supported the policy of Carteret, put himself at the head of a force of forty thousand men, the bulk of whom were English and Hanoverians, and marched from the Netherlands to the Main. His advance was checked and finally turned into a retreat by the Duc de Noailles, who appeared with a superior army on the south bank of the river, and finally throwing thirty-one thousand men across it threatened to compel the King to surrender. In the battle of Dettingen which followed (June 27, 1743) the allied army was in fact only saved from destruction by the impetuosity of the French horse and the dogged obstinacy with which the English held their ground and at last forced their opponents to recross the Main. But small as was the victory, it produced amazing results. The French evacuated Germany. The English and Austrian armies appeared on the Rhine. In the spring of 1744 an Austrian army marched upon Naples, with the purpose of transferring it after its conquest to the Emperor, whose hereditary dominions in Bavaria were to pass in return to Maria Theresa.

**Fontenoy.**

But if Frederick of Prussia had withdrawn from the war on the cession of Silesia, he was resolute to take up arms again rather than suffer this great aggrandisement of the House of Austria. His sudden alliance with France failed at first to change the course of the war, for though he was successful in seizing Prague and drawing the Austrian army from the Rhine he was soon driven from Bohemia, while the death of the Emperor forced Bavaria to lay down its arms and to ally itself with Maria Theresa. So high were the Queen's hopes at this moment that she formed a secret alliance with Russia for the division of the Prussian monarchy. But in 1745 the tide turned. Marshal Saxe established the superiority of the French army in Flanders by his defeat of the Duke of Cumberland. Advancing with a force of English, Dutch, and Hanoverians to the relief of Tournay, the Duke on the 31st of May 1745 found the French covered by a line of fortified villages and redoubts with but a single narrow gap near the hamlet of Fontenoy. Into this gap however, the English troops, formed in a dense column, doggedly thrust themselves in spite of a terrible fire; but at the moment when the day seemed won the



Digitized by Google

French guns, rapidly concentrated in their front, tore the column in pieces and drove it back in a slow and orderly retreat. The blow was quickly followed up in June by a victory of Frederick at Hohenfriedburg which drove the Austrians from Silesia, and by a landing of Charles Edward, the son of the Old Pretender as James Stuart was called, on the coast of Scotland at the close of July. But defeat abroad and danger at home only quickened a political reaction which had begun long before in England. Even Carteret had been startled by the plan for a dismemberment of Prussia; and as early as 1744 the bulk of the Whig party had learnt the wisdom of the more temperate policy of Walpole, and had opened the way for an accommodation with Frederick by compelling Carteret to resign. The Pelhams, who represented Walpole's system, were now supreme, and their work was aided by the disasters of 1745. When England was threatened by a Catholic Pretender, it was no time for weakening the chief Protestant power in Germany. On the refusal therefore of Maria Theresa to join in a general peace, England concluded the Convention of Hanover with Prussia at the close of August, and withdrew so far as Germany was concerned from the war.

**Charles Edward.**

The danger at home indeed had already vindicated Walpole's prudence in foiling the hopes of the Pretender by his steady friendship with France. It was only from France that aid could reach the Jacobites, and the war with France at once revived their hopes. Charles Edward, the grandson of James the Second, was placed by the French Government at the head of a formidable armament in 1744; but his plan of a descent on Scotland was defeated by a storm which wrecked his fleet, and by the march of the French troops which had embarked in it to the war in Flanders. In 1745 however, the young adventurer again embarked with but seven friends in a small vessel and landed on a little island of the Hebrides. For three weeks he stood almost alone; but on the 29th of August the clans rallied to his standard in Glenfinnan, and Charles found himself at the head of fifteen hundred men. His force swelled to an army as he marched through Blair Athol on Perth, entered Edinburgh in triumph, and proclaimed "James the Eighth" at the Town Cross. Two thousand English troops who marched against him under Sir John Cope were broken and cut to pieces on the 21st of September by a single charge of the clansmen at Preston Pans, and victory at once doubled the forces of the conqueror. The Prince was now at the head of six thousand men, but all were still Highlanders, for the people of the Lowlands held aloof from his standard. It was with the utmost difficulty that he could induce them to follow him to the south. His tact and energy however at last conquered all obstacles, and after skilfully evading an army gathered at Newcastle he marched through Lancashire and pushed on the 4th of December as far as Derby. But all hope of

Digitized by Google

success was at an end. Hardly a man rose in his support as he passed through the districts where Jacobitism boasted of its strength. The people flocked to see his march as if to see a show. Catholics and Tories abounded in Lancashire, but only a single squire took up arms. Manchester was looked on as the most Jacobite of English towns, but all the aid it gave was an illumination and two thousand pounds. From Carlisle to Derby he had been joined by hardly two hundred men. The policy of Walpole had in fact secured England for the House of Hanover. The long peace, the prosperity of the country, and the clemency of the Government, had done their work. Jacobitism as a fighting force was dead, and even Charles Edward saw that it was hopeless to conquer England with five thousand Highlanders. He soon learnt too that forces of double his own strength were closing on either side of him, while a third army under the King and Lord Stair covered London. Scotland itself, now that the Highlanders were away, quietly renewed in all the districts of the Lowlands its allegiance to the House of Hanover. Even in the Highlands the Macleods rose in arms for King George, while the Gordons refused to stir, though roused by a small French force which landed at Montrose. To advance further south was impossible, and Charles fell rapidly back on Glasgow; but the reinforcements which he found there raised his army to nine thousand men, and he marched on the 23rd of January, 1746, on the English army under General Hawley which had followed his retreat and encamped near Falkirk. Again the wild charge of his Highlanders won victory for the Prince, but victory was as fatal as defeat. The bulk of his forces dispersed with their booty to the mountains, and Charles fell sullenly back to the north before the Duke of Cumberland. On the 16th of April, the two armies faced one another on Culloden Moor, a few miles eastward of Inverness. The Highlanders still numbered six thousand men, but they were starving and dispirited. Cumberland's force was nearly double that of the Prince. Torn by the Duke's guns, the clansmen flung themselves in their old fashion on the English front; but they were received with a terrible fire of musketry, and the few that broke through the first line found themselves fronted by a second. In a few moments all was over, and the Highlanders a mass of hunted fugitives. Charles himself after strange adventures escaped to France. In England fifty of his followers were hanged, three Scotch lords, Lovat, Balmerino, and Kilmarnock, brought to the block, and forty persons of rank attainted by Act of Parliament. More extensive measures of repression were needful in the Highlands. The feudal tenures were abolished. The hereditary jurisdictions of the chiefs were bought up and transferred to the Crown. The tartan, or garb of the clansmen, was forbidden by law. These measures, followed by a general Act of Indemnity, proved effective for their purpose. The dread of the

Digitized by Google

clansmen passed away, and the sheriff's writ soon ran through the Highlands with as little resistance as in the streets of Edinburgh.

**Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle.**

On the Continent the war still lingered on, though its original purpose had disappeared. The victories of Maria Theresa in Italy were balanced by those of France in the Netherlands, where Marshal Saxe inflicted on the English and Dutch the defeats of Roucoux and Lauffeld. The danger of Holland and the financial exhaustion of France at last brought about in 1748 the conclusion of a Peace at Aix-la-Chapelle, by which both parties restored their conquests; and with this peace the active work of the Pelham Ministry came to an end. Utter inaction settled down over political life, and turnpike bills or acts for the furtherance of trade engaged the attention of Parliament till the death of Henry Pelham in 1754. But abroad things were less quiet. The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was in fact a mere truce forced on the contending powers by sheer exhaustion. France was dreaming of far wider schemes for the humiliation of England. The troubled question of the trade with America had only been waived by Spain. The two powers of the House of Bourbon were still united by the Family Compact, and as early as 1752 the Queen of Hungary by a startling change of policy had secretly drawn to their alliance. Neither Maria Theresa nor Saxony in fact had ever really abandoned the design for the recovery of Silesia and for a partition of Prussia. The jealousy which Russia entertained of the growth of a strong power in North Germany, brought the Czarina Elizabeth to promise aid to their scheme; and in 1755 the league of these three powers with France and Spain was silently completed. So secret were these negotiations that they had utterly escaped the notice of the Duke of Newcastle, the brother of Henry Pelham, and his successor in the direction of English affairs; but they were detected from the first by the keen eye of Frederick of Prussia, who found himself face to face with a line of foes which stretched from Paris to St. Petersburg.

**The Seven Years' War.**

The danger to England was hardly less. France appeared again on the stage with a vigour and audacity which recalled the days of Lewis the Fourteenth. The weakness and corruption of its government were hidden for the time by the daring scope of its plans and the ability of the agents it found to carry them out. The aims of France spread far beyond Europe. In India, a French adventurer was founding a French Empire, and planning the expulsion of the English merchants from their settlements along the coast. In America, France not only claimed the valleys of the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi, but forbade the English Colonists to cross the Alleghanies, and planted Fort Duquesne on the waters of the Ohio. The disastrous repulse of General Braddock, who had marched on this fort in 1755 with a small force of regulars and Colonial Militia, awoke even Newcastle to his danger; and the alliance between England and Prussia at the close of

Digitized by Google

Sec. I.
WILLIAM PITT.
1742-1762.

the year gave the signal for the Seven Years' War. No war has had greater results on the history of the world or brought greater triumphs to England; but few have had more disastrous beginnings. Newcastle was too weak and ignorant to rule without aid, and yet too greedy of power to purchase aid by sharing it with more capable men. His preparations for the gigantic struggle before him may be guessed from the fact that there were but three regiments fit for service in England at the opening of 1756. France on the other hand was quick in her attack. Port Mahon in Minorca, the key of the Mediterranean, was besieged by the Duke of Richelieu and forced to capitulate. To complete the shame of England, a fleet sent to its relief under Admiral Byng retreated before the French. In Germany Frederick had seized Dresden at the outset of the war, and forced the Saxon army to surrender; and in 1757 his victory at Prague made him master of Bohemia; but a defeat at Kolin drove him to retreat again into Saxony. In the same year the Duke of Cumberland, who had taken post on the Weser with an army of fifty thousand men for the defence of Hanover, fell back before a French army to the mouth of the Elbe, and engaged by the Convention of Closter-Seven to disband his forces. A despondency without parallel in our history took possession of our coolest statesmen, and even the impassive Chesterfield cried in despair, "We are no longer a nation."

**William Pitt.**

But the nation of which Chesterfield despaired was really on the eve of its greatest triumphs, and the miserable incapacity of the Duke of Newcastle only called to the front the genius of William Pitt. Pitt was the son of a wealthy governor of Madras, who had entered Parliament in 1734 as member for one of his father's pocket boroughs, and had at once headed the younger "Patriots" in their attack on Walpole. His fiery spirit had been hushed in office during the "broad-bottom administration" which followed the Minister's fall, but the death of Henry Pelham again replaced him at the head of the opposition. The first disaster of the war drove Newcastle from office, and in November 1756 Pitt became Secretary of State; but in four months he was forced to resign, and Newcastle reappointed. In July 1757 however, it was necessary to recall him. The failure of Newcastle's administration forced the Duke to a junction with his rival; and fortunately for their country, the character of the two statesmen made the compromise an easy one. For all that Pitt coveted, for the general direction of public affairs, the control of foreign policy, the administration of the war, Newcastle had neither capacity nor inclination. On the other hand, his skill in parliamentary management was unrivalled. If he knew little else, he knew better than any living man the price of every member and the intrigues of every borough. What he cared for was not the control of affairs, but the distribution of patronage and the work of corruption, and from this Pitt

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
WILLIAM PITT.
1742-1762.

turned disdainfully away. "Mr. Pitt does everything," wrote Horace Walpole, "and the Duke gives everything. So long as they agree in this partition they may do what they please." Out of the union of these two strangely contrasted leaders, in fact, rose the greatest, as it was the last, of the purely Whig administrations. But its real power lay from beginning to end in Pitt himself. Poor as he was, for his income was little more than two hundred a year, and springing as he did from a family of no political importance, it was by sheer dint of genius that the young cornet of horse, at whose youth and inexperience Walpole had sneered, seized a power which the Whig houses had ever since the Revolution kept jealously in their grasp. His ambition had no petty aim. "I want to call England," he said as he took office, "out of that enervate state in which twenty thousand men from France can shake her." His call was soon answered. He at once breathed his own lofty spirit into the country he served, as he communicated something of his own grandeur to the men who served him. "No man," said a soldier of the time, "ever entered Mr. Pitt's closet who did not feel himself braver when he came out than when he went in." Ill-combined as were his earlier expeditions, many as were his failures, he roused a temper in the nation at large which made ultimate defeat impossible. "England has been a long time in labour," exclaimed Frederick of Prussia as he recognized a greatness like his own, "but she has at last brought forth a man."

**Pitt and his Age.**

It is this personal and solitary grandeur which strikes us most as we look back to William Pitt. The tone of his speech and action stands out in utter contrast with the tone of his time. In the midst of a society critical, polite, indifferent, simple even to the affectation of simplicity, witty and amusing but absolutely prosaic, cool of heart and of head, sceptical of virtue and enthusiasm, sceptical above all of itself, Pitt stood absolutely alone. The depth of his conviction, his passionate love for all that he deemed lofty and true, his fiery energy, his poetic imaginativeness, his theatrical airs and rhetoric, his haughty self-assumption, his pompousness and extravagance, were not more puzzling to his contemporaries than the confidence with which he appealed to the higher sentiments of mankind, the scorn with which he turned from a corruption which had till then been the great engine of politics, the undoubting faith which he felt in himself, in the grandeur of his aims, and in his power to carry them out. "I know that I can save the country," he said to the Duke of Devonshire on his entry into the Ministry, "and I know no other man can." The groundwork of Pitt's character was an intense and passionate pride; but it was a pride which kept him from stooping to the level of the men who had so long held England in their hands. He was the first statesman since the Restoration who set the example of a purely public spirit. Keen as was his love of power, no man ever refused

Digitized by Google

office so often, or accepted it with so strict a regard to the principles he professed. "I will not go to Court," he replied to an offer which was made him, "if I may not bring the Constitution with me." For the corruption about him he had nothing but disdain. He left to Newcastle the buying of seats and the purchase of members. At the outset of his career Pelham appointed him to the most lucrative office in his administration, that of Paymaster of the Forces; but its profits were of an illicit kind, and poor as he was, Pitt refused to accept one farthing beyond his salary. His pride never appeared in loftier and nobler form than in his attitude towards the people at large. No leader had ever a wider popularity than "the great commoner," as Pitt was styled, but his air was always that of a man who commands popularity, not that of one who seeks it. He never bent to flatter popular prejudice. When mobs were roaring themselves hoarse for "Wilkes and liberty," he denounced Wilkes as a worthless profligate; and when all England went mad in its hatred of the Scots, Pitt haughtily declared his esteem for a people whose courage he had been the first to enlist on the side of loyalty. His noble figure, his flashing eye, his majestic voice, the fire and grandeur of his eloquence, gave him a sway over the House of Commons far greater than any other Minister has possessed. He could silence an opponent with a look of scorn, or hush the whole House with a single word. But he never stooped to the arts by which men form a political party, and at the height of his power his personal following hardly numbered half a dozen members.

**The Great Commoner.**

His real strength, indeed, lay not in Parliament but in the people at large. His significant title of "the great commoner" marks a political revolution. "It is the people who have sent me here," Pitt boasted with a haughty pride when the nobles of the Cabinet opposed his will. He was the first to see that the long political inactivity of the public mind had ceased, and that the progress of commerce and industry had produced a great middle class, which no longer found its representatives in the legislature. "You have taught me," said George the Second when Pitt sought to save Byng by appealing to the sentiment of Parliament, "to look for the voice of my people in other places than within the House of Commons." It was this unrepresented class which had forced him into power. During his struggle with Newcastle the greater towns backed him with the gift of their freedom and addresses of confidence. "For weeks," laughs Horace Walpole, "it rained gold boxes." London stood by him through good report and evil report, and the wealthiest of English merchants, Alderman Beckford, was proud to figure as his political lieutenant. The temper of Pitt indeed harmonized admirably with the temper of the commercial England which rallied round him, with its energy, its self-confidence, its pride, its patriotism, its honesty, its moral earnestness. The

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
WILLIAM PITT.
1742-1762.

merchant and the trader were drawn by a natural attraction to the one statesman of their time whose aims were unselfish, whose hands were clean, whose life was pure and full of tender affection for wife and child. But there was a far deeper ground for their enthusiastic reverence and for the reverence which his country has borne Pitt ever since. He loved England with an intense and personal love. He believed in her power, her glory, her public virtue, till England learnt to believe in herself. Her triumphs were his triumphs, her defeats his defeats. Her dangers lifted him high above all thought of self or party-spirit. "Be one people," he cried to the factions who rose to bring about his fall: "forget everything but the public! I set you the example!" His glowing patriotism was the real spell by which he held England. Even the faults which chequered his character told for him with the middle classes. The Whig statesmen who preceded him had been men whose pride expressed itself in a marked simplicity and absence of pretence. Pitt was essentially an actor, dramatic in the cabinet, in the House, in his very office. He transacted business with his clerks in full dress. His letters to his family, genuine as his love for them was, are stilted and unnatural in tone. It was easy for the wits of his day to jest at his affectation, his pompous gait, the dramatic appearance which he made on great debates with his limbs swathed in flannel and his crutch by his side. Early in life Walpole sneered at him for bringing into the House of Commons "the gestures and emotions of the stage." But the classes to whom Pitt appealed were classes not easily offended by faults of taste, and saw nothing to laugh at in the statesman who was borne into the lobby amidst the tortures of the gout or carried into the House of Lords to breathe his last in a protest against national dishonour.

**Pitt's Eloquence.**

Above all Pitt wielded the strength of a resistless eloquence. The power of political speech had been revealed in the stormy debates of the Long Parliament, but it was cramped in its utterance by the legal and theological pedantry of the time. Pedantry was flung off by the age of the Revolution, but in the eloquence of Somers and his rivals we see ability rather than genius, knowledge, clearness of expression, precision of thought, the lucidity of the pleader or the man of business, rather than the passion of the orator. Of this clearness of statement Pitt had little or none. He was no ready debater like Walpole, no speaker of set speeches like Chesterfield. His set speeches were always his worst, for in these his want of taste, his love of effect, his trite quotations and extravagant metaphors came at once to the front. That with defects like these he stood far above every orator of his time was due above all to his profound conviction, to the earnestness and sincerity with which he spoke. "I must sit still," he whispered once to a friend, "for when once I am up everything that is in my mind comes out." But the reality of his

Digitized by Google

eloquence was transfigured by a glow of passion which not only raised him high above the men of his own day but set him in the front rank among the orators of the world. The cool reasoning, the wit, the common sense of his age made way for a splendid audacity, a large and poetic imagination, a sympathy with popular emotion, a sustained grandeur, a lofty vehemence, a command over the whole range of human feeling. He passed without an effort from the most solemn appeal to the gayest raillery, from the keenest sarcasm to the tenderest pathos. Every word was driven home by the grand self-consciousness of the speaker. He spoke always as one having authority. He was in fact, the first English orator whose words were a power, a power not over Parliament only but over the nation at large. Parliamentary reporting was as yet unknown, and it was only in detached phrases and half-remembered outbursts that the voice of Pitt reached beyond the walls of St. Stephen's. But it was especially in these sudden outbursts of inspiration, in these brief passionate appeals, that the power of his eloquence lay. The few broken words we have of him stir the same thrill in our day which they stirred in the men of his own.

**Pitt and the War.**

But passionate as was Pitt's eloquence, it was the eloquence of a statesman, not of a rhetorician. Time has approved almost all his greater struggles, his defence of the liberty of the subject against arbitrary imprisonment under "general warrants," of the liberty of the press against Lord Mansfield, of the rights of constituencies against the House of Commons, of the constitutional rights of America against England itself. His foreign policy was directed to the preservation of Prussia, and Prussia has at last vindicated his foresight by the creation of Germany. We have adopted his plans for the direct government of India by the Crown, plans which when he proposed them were regarded as insane. Pitt was the first to recognize the liberal character of the Church of England, its "Calvinistic Articles and Arminian Liturgy;" he was the first to sound the note of Parliamentary reform. One of his earliest measures shows the generosity and originality of his mind. He quieted Scotland by employing its Jacobites in the service of their country and by raising Highland regiments among its clans. The selection of Wolfe and Amherst as generals showed his contempt for precedent and his inborn knowledge of men. There was little indeed in the military expeditions with which Pitt's Ministry opened to justify his fame. Money and blood were lavished on buccaneering descents upon the French coasts which did small damage to the enemy. But in Europe Pitt wisely limited himself to a secondary part. He recognized the genius of Frederick the Great, and resolved to give him a firm and energetic support. The Convention of Closter-Seven had almost reduced Frederick to despair. But the moment of Pitt's accession to power was marked on the King's part by the most brilliant display of military genius which the modern world

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
WILLIAM PITT.
1742-1762.

had as yet seen. Two months after his repulse at Kolin he flung himself on a French army which advanced into the heart of Germany and annihilated it in the victory of Rossbach. Before another month had passed he hurried from the Saale to the Oder, and by a yet more signal victory at Leuthen cleared Silesia of the Austrians. But these prodigious efforts would have been useless but for the aid of Pitt. The English Minister poured subsidy upon subsidy into Frederick's exhausted treasury, while he refused to ratify the Convention of Closter-Seven, and followed the King's advice by setting the Prince of Brunswick at the head of the army on the Elbe.

**Clive.**

The victory of Rossbach was destined to change the fortunes of the world by bringing about the unity of Germany; but the year of Rossbach was the year of a victory hardly less important in the East. The genius and audacity of a merchant-clerk made a company of English traders the sovereigns of Bengal, and opened that wondrous career of conquest which has added the Indian peninsula, from Ceylon to the Himalayas, to the dominions of the British crown. The early intercourse of England with India gave little promise of the great fortunes which awaited it. It was not till the close of Elizabeth's reign, a century after Vasco da Gama had crept round the Cape of Good Hope and founded the Portuguese settlements on the Goa coast, that an East India Company was founded in London. The trade, profitable as it was, remained small in extent, and the three early factories of the Company were only gradually acquired during the century which followed. The first, that of Madras, consisted of but six fishermen's houses beneath Fort St. George; that of Bombay was ceded by the Portuguese as part of the dowry of Catherine of Braganza; while Fort William, with the mean village which has since grown into Calcutta, owes its origin to the reign of William the Third. Each of these forts was built simply for the protection of the Company's warehouses, and guarded by a few "sepahis," sepoys, or paid native soldiers; while the clerks and traders of each establishment were under the direction of a President and a Council. One of these clerks in the middle of the eighteenth century was Robert Clive, the son of a small proprietor near Market Drayton in Shropshire, an idle dare-devil of a boy whom his friends had been glad to get rid of by packing him off in the Company's service as a writer to Madras. His early days there were days of wretchedness and despair. He was poor and cut off from his fellows by the haughty shyness of his temper, weary of desk-work, and haunted by home sickness. Twice he attempted suicide; and it was only on the failure of his second attempt that he flung down the pistol which baffled him with a conviction that he was reserved for higher things.

**Dupleix.**

A change came at last in the shape of war and captivity. As soon

Digitized by Google

as the war of the Austrian Succession broke out the superiority of the French in power and influence tempted them to expel the English from India. Labourdonnais, the governor of the French colony of the Mauritius, besieged Madras, razed it to the ground, and carried its clerks and merchants prisoners to Pondicherry. Clive was among these captives, but he escaped in disguise, and returning to the settlement threw aside his clerkship for an ensign's commission in the force which the Company was busily raising. For the capture of Madras had not only established the repute of the French arms, but had roused Dupleix, the governor of Pondicherry, to conceive plans for the creation of a French empire in India. When the English merchants of Elizabeth's day brought their goods to Surat, all India, save the south, had just been brought for the first time under the rule of a single great power by the Mogul Emperors of the line of Akbar. But with the death of Aurungzebe, in the reign of Anne, the Mogul Empire fell fast into decay. A line of feudal princes raised themselves to independence in Rajpootana. The lieutenants of the Emperor founded separate sovereignties at Lucknow and Hyderabad, in the Carnatic, and in Bengal. The plain of the Upper Indus was occupied by a race of religious fanatics called the Sikhs. Persian and Affghan invaders crossed the Indus, and succeeded even in sacking Delhi, the capital of the Moguls. Clans of systematic plunderers, who were known under the name of Mahrattas, and who were in fact the natives whom conquest had long held in subjection, poured down from the highlands along the western coast, ravaged as far as Calcutta and Tanjore, and finally set up independent states at Poonah and Gwalior. Dupleix skilfully availed himself of the disorder around him. He offered his aid to the Emperor against the rebels and invaders who had reduced his power to a shadow; and it was in the Emperor's name that he meddled with the quarrels of the states of Central and Southern India, made himself virtually master of the court of Hyderabad, and seated a creature of his own on the throne of the Carnatic. Trichinopoly, the one town which held out against this Nabob of the Carnatic, was all but brought to surrender when Clive, in 1751, came forward with a daring scheme for its relief. With a few hundred English and sepoys he pushed through a thunderstorm to the surprise of Arcot, the Nabob's capital, entrenched himself in its enormous fort, and held it for fifty days against thousands of assailants. Moved by his gallantry, the Mahrattas, who had never believed that Englishmen would fight before, advanced and broke up the siege; but Clive was no sooner freed than he showed equal vigour in the field. At the head of raw recruits who ran away at the first sound of a gun, and sepoys who hid themselves as soon as the cannon opened fire, he twice attacked and defeated the French and their Indian allies, foiled every effort of Dupleix, and razed to

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
WILLIAM PITT.
1742-1762.

**Plassey.**

the ground a pompous pillar which the French governor had set up in honour of his earlier victories.

Recalled by broken health to England, Clive returned at the outbreak of the Seven Years' War to win for England a greater prize than that which his victories had won for it in the supremacy of the Carnatic. He had only been a few months at Madras when a crime whose horror still lingers in English memories called him to Bengal. Bengal, the delta of the Ganges, was the richest and most fertile of all the provinces of India. Its rice, its sugar, its silk, and the produce of its looms, were famous in European markets. Its Viceroys, like their fellow lieutenants, had become practically independent of the Emperor, and had added to Bengal the provinces of Orissa and Behar. Surajah Dowlah, the master of this vast domain, had long been jealous of the enterprise and wealth of the English traders; and, roused at this moment by the instigation of the French, he appeared before Fort William, seized its settlers, and thrust a hundred and fifty of them into a small prison called the Black Hole of Calcutta. The heat of an Indian summer did its work of death. The wretched prisoners trampled each other under foot in the madness of thirst, and in the morning only twenty-three remained alive. Clive sailed at the news with a thousand Englishmen and two thousand sepoys to wreak vengeance for the crime. He was no longer the boy-soldier of Arcot; and the tact and skill with which he met Surajah Dowlah in the negotiations by which the Viceroy strove to avert a conflict were sullied by the Oriental falsehood and treachery to which he stooped. But his courage remained unbroken. When the two armies faced each other on the plain of Plassey the odds were so great that on the very eve of the battle a council of war counselled retreat. Clive withdrew to a grove hard by, and after an hour's lonely musing gave the word to fight. Courage, in fact, was all that was needed. The fifty thousand foot and fourteen thousand horse who were seen covering the plain at daybreak on the 23rd of June, 1757, were soon thrown into confusion by the English guns, and broke in headlong rout before the English charge. The death of Surajah Dowlah enabled the Company to place a creature of its own on the throne of Bengal; but his rule soon became a nominal one. With the victory of Plassey began in fact the Empire of England in the East.

**Minden.**

In Germany, the news of Rossbach called the French from the Elbe back to the Rhine in the opening of 1758. Ferdinand of Brunswick, reinforced with twenty thousand English soldiers, held them at bay during the summer, while Frederick, foiled in an attack on Moravia, drove the Russians back on Poland in the battle of Zorndorf. His defeat, however, by the Austrian General Daun at Hochkirch, proved the first of a series of terrible misfortunes. The year 1759

Digitized by Google

marks the lowest point of Frederick's fortunes. A fresh advance of the Russian army forced the King to attack it at Kunersdorf in August, and his repulse ended in the utter rout of his army. For the moment all seemed lost, for even Berlin lay open to the conqueror. A few days later the surrender of Dresden gave Saxony to the Austrians; and at the close of the year an attempt upon them at Plauen was foiled with terrible loss. But every disaster was retrieved by the indomitable courage and tenacity of the King, and winter found him as before master of Silesia and of all Saxony save the ground which Daun's camp covered. The year which marked the lowest point of Frederick's fortunes was the year of Pitt's greatest triumphs, the year of Minden and Quiberon and Quebec. France aimed both at a descent upon England and the conquest of Hanover, and gathered a naval armament at Brest, while fifty thousand men under Contades and Broglie united on the Weser. Ferdinand with less than forty thousand met them (August 1) on the field of Minden. The French marched along the Weser to the attack, with their flanks protected by that river and a brook which ran into it, and with their cavalry, ten thousand strong, massed in the centre. The six English regiments in Ferdinand's army fronted the French horse, and, mistaking their general's order, marched at once upon them in line, regardless of the batteries on their flank, and rolling back charge after charge with volleys of musketry. In an hour the French centre was utterly broken. "I have seen," said Contades, "what I never thought to be possible—a single line of infantry break through three lines of cavalry, ranked in order of battle, and tumble them to ruin!" Nothing but the refusal of Lord George Sackville to complete the victory by a charge of Ferdinand's horse saved the French from utter rout. As it was, their army again fell back broken on Frankfort and the Rhine. The project of an invasion of England met with the same success. Eighteen thousand men lay ready to embark on board the French fleet, when Admiral Hawke came in sight of it on the 20th of November, at the mouth of Quiberon Bay. The sea was rolling high, and the coast where the French ships lay was so dangerous from its shoals and granite reefs that the pilot remonstrated with the English admiral against his project of attack. "You have done your duty in this remonstrance," Hawke coolly replied; "now lay me alongside the French admiral." Two English ships were lost on the shoals, but the French fleet was ruined and the disgrace of Byng's retreat wiped away.

**The Conquest of Canada.**

It was not in the Old World only that the year of Minden and Quiberon brought glory to the arms of England. In Europe, Pitt had wisely limited his efforts to the support of Prussia, but across the Atlantic the field was wholly his own. The French dominion in North America, which was originally confined to Cape Breton and

Digitized by Google

SEC. I.
WILLIAM PITT.
1742-1762.

Canada, had been pushed by the activity of the Marquis of Montcalm along the great chain of lakes towards the Ohio and the Mississippi. Three strong forts, that of Duquesne on the Ohio, that of Niagara on the St. Lawrence, and that of Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain, supported by a chain of less important posts, threatened to cut off the English colonies of the coast from any possibility of extension over the prairies of the West. Montcalm was gifted with singular powers of administration; he had succeeded in attaching the bulk of the Indian tribes from Canada as far as the Mississippi to the cause of his nation, and the value of their aid had been shown in the rout of the British detachment which General Braddock led against Fort Duquesne. But Pitt had no sooner turned his attention to American affairs than these desultory raids were superseded by a large and comprehensive plan of attack. A combined expedition under Amherst and Boscawen captured Louisburg in 1758, and reduced the colony of Cape Breton at the mouth of the St. Lawrence. The American militia supported the British troops in a vigorous campaign against the forts, and though Montcalm was able to repulse General Abercromby from Ticonderoga, a force from Philadelphia made itself master of Duquesne. The name of Pittsburg which was given to their new conquest still commemorates the enthusiasm of the colonists for the great Minister who first opened to them the West. The next year (1759) saw the evacuation of Ticonderoga before the advance of Amherst, and the capture of Fort Niagara after the defeat of an Indian force which marched to its relief. But Pitt had resolved not merely to foil the ambition of Montcalm but to destroy the French rule in America altogether; and while Amherst was breaking through the line of forts, an expedition under General Wolfe entered the St. Lawrence and anchored below Quebec. Pitt had discerned the genius and heroism which lay hidden beneath the awkward manner and the occasional gasconade of the young soldier of thirty-three whom he chose for the crowning exploit of the war, but for a while his sagacity seemed to have failed. No efforts could draw Montcalm from the long line of inaccessible cliffs which at this point borders the river, and for six weeks Wolfe saw his men wasting away in inactivity while he himself lay prostrate with sickness and despair. At last his resolution was fixed, and in a long line of boats the army dropped down the St. Lawrence to a point at the base of the Heights of Abraham, where a narrow path had been discovered to the summit. Not a voice broke the silence of the night save the voice of Wolfe himself, as he quietly repeated the stanzas of Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard," remarking as he closed, "I had rather be the author of that poem than take Quebec." But his nature was as brave as it was tender; he was the first to leap on shore and to scale the narrow path where no two men could go abreast. His men followed,

Digitized by Google

pulling themselves to the top by the help of bushes and the crags, and at daybreak on the 12th of September the whole army stood in orderly formation before Quebec. Wolfe headed a charge which broke the lines of Montcalm, but a ball pierced his breast in the moment of victory. "They run," cried an officer who held the dying man in his arms—"I protest they run." Wolfe rallied to ask who they were that ran, and was told "the French." "Then," he murmured, "I die happy!" The fall of Montcalm in the moment of his defeat completed the victory, and the submission of Canada put an end to the dream of a French empire in America. In breaking through the line with which France had striven to check the westward advance of the English colonists Pitt had unconsciously changed the history of the world. His support of Frederick and of Prussia was to lead in our own day to the creation of a United Germany. His conquest of Canada, by removing the enemy whose dread knit the colonists to the mother country and by flinging open to their energies in the days to come the boundless plains of the West, laid the foundation of the United States.

### Section II.—The Independence of America. 1761—1785.

[*Authorities.*—The two sides of the American quarrel have been told with the same purpose of fairness and truthfulness, though with a very different bias, by Lord Stanhope ("History of England from Peace of Utrecht"), and Mr. Bancroft ("History of the United States"). The latter is by far the more detailed and picturesque, the former perhaps the cooler and more impartial of the two narratives. To the authorities for England itself given in the last section we may add here Mr. Massey's valuable "History of England from the Accession of George the Third"; Walpole's "Memoirs of the Early Reign of George the Third;" the Rockingham Memoirs; the Grenville Papers; the Bedford Correspondence; the correspondence of George the Third with Lord North; the Letters of Junius; and Lord Russell's "Life and Correspondence of C. J. Fox." Burke's speeches and pamphlets during this period, above all his "Thoughts on the Causes of the Present Discontents," are indispensable for any real knowledge of it. The Constitutional History of Sir Erskine May opens with this time, and all but compensates us, in its fulness and impartiality and acuteness, for the loss of Mr. Hallam's invaluable comments.]

**History and the War.**

England had never played so great a part in the history of mankind as now. The year 1759 was a year of triumphs in every quarter of the world. In September came the news of Minden, and of a victory off Lagos. In October came tidings of the capture of Quebec. November brought word of the French defeat at Quiberon. "We are forced to ask every morning what victory there is," laughed Horace Walpole, "for fear of missing one." But it was not so much in the number as in the importance of its triumphs that the war stood and remains still without a rival. It is no exaggeration to say that three of its many victories determined for ages to come the destinies



Digitized by Google

of the world. With that of Rossbach began the recreation of Germany, its intellectual supremacy over Europe, its political union under the leadership of Prussia and its kings. With that of Plassey the influence of Europe told for the first time since the days of Alexander on the nations of the East. The world, in Burke's gorgeous phrase, saw "one of the races of the north-east cast into the heart of Asia new manners, new doctrines, new institutions." With the triumph of Wolfe on the Heights of Abraham began the history of the United States of America.

**The American Colonies.**

The progress of the American colonies from the time when the Puritan emigration added the four New England States, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Rhode Island to those of Maryland and Virginia had been slow, but it had never ceased. Settlers still came, though in smaller numbers, and two new colonies south of Virginia received from Charles the Second their name of the Carolinas. The war with Holland transferred to British rule the district claimed by the Dutch from the Hudson to the inner Lakes, and the country was at once granted by Charles to his brother, and received from him the name of New York. Portions were soon broken off from this vast territory to form the colonies of New Jersey and Delaware. In 1682 a train of Quakers followed William Penn across the Delaware into the heart of the primæval forest, and became a colony which recalled its founder and the woodlands in which he planted it in its name of Pennsylvania. A long interval elapsed before a new settlement, which received its title of Georgia from the reigning sovereign, George the Second, was established by General Oglethorpe on the Savannah as a refuge for English debtors and for the persecuted Protestants of Germany. Slow as this progress seemed, the colonies were really growing fast in numbers and in wealth. Their population at the accession of George the Third was little less than a million and a half, a fourth of the population of the mother country. Their wealth had risen even faster than their numbers. Half a million of slaves were employed in tilling the rice-fields of Georgia, the indigo fields of the Carolinas, and the tobacco plantations of Virginia. New York and Pennsylvania grew rich from corn-harvests and the timber trade. But the distinction between the Northern and Southern colonies was more than an industrial one. In the Southern States the prevalence of slavery produced an aristocratic spirit and favoured the creation of large estates. Even the system of entails had been introduced among the wealthy planters of Virginia, where many of the older English families found representatives in houses such as those of Fairfax and Washington. Throughout New England, on the other hand, the characteristics of the Puritans, their piety, their intolerance, their simplicity of life, their love of equality and tendency to democratic institutions, remained unchanged. In education and political activity

Digitized by Google

New England stood far ahead of its fellow colonies, for the settlement of the Puritans had been followed at once by the establishment of a system of local schools which is still the glory of America. "Every township," it was enacted, "after the Lord hath increased them to the number of fifty householders, shall appoint one to teach all children to write and read; and when any town shall increase to the number of a hundred families, they shall set up a grammar school."

**England and the Colonies.**

Great, however, as these differences were, and great as was to be their influence on American history, they were little felt as yet. In the main features of their outer organization the whole of the colonies stood fairly at one. In religious and in civil matters alike all of them contrasted sharply with the England at home. Religious tolerance had been brought about by a medley of religious faiths such as the world had never seen before. New England was still a Puritan stronghold. In Virginia the bulk of the settlers clung to the Episcopalian Church. Roman Catholics formed a large part of the population of Maryland. Pennsylvania was a State of Quakers. Presbyterians and Baptists had fled from tests and persecutions to colonize New Jersey. Lutherans and Moravians from Germany abounded among the settlers of Carolina and Georgia. In such a chaos of creeds religious persecution or an Established Church were equally impossible. There was the same real unity in the political tendency and organization of the States as in the religious. Whether the temper of the colony was democratic, moderate, or oligarchical, its form of government was pretty much the same. The original rights of the proprietor, the projector and grantee of the earliest settlement, had in every case either ceased to exist or fallen into desuetude. The government of each colony lay in a House of Assembly elected by the people at large, with a Council sometimes elected, sometimes nominated by the Governor, and a Governor appointed by the Crown. With the appointment of the Governor all administrative interference on the part of the Government at home practically ended. The colonies were left by a happy neglect to themselves. It was wittily said at a later day, that "Mr. Grenville lost America because he read the American despatches, which none of his predecessors ever did." There was little room, indeed, for any interference within the limits of the colonies. Their privileges were secured by royal charters. Their Assemblies had the sole right of internal taxation, and exercised it sparingly. Walpole, like Pitt, afterwards set roughly aside the project for an American excise. "I have Old England set against me," he said, "by this measure, and do you think I will have New England too?" Even in matters of trade the supremacy of the mother country was far from being a galling one. There were some small import duties, but they were evaded by a well-understood system of smuggling. The restriction of trade with the colonies to Great Britain was more than compensated by the



Digitized by Google

SEC. II.
THE INDEPENDENCE OF AMERICA.
1761-1785.

commercial privileges which the Americans enjoyed as British subjects. As yet, therefore, there was nothing to break the good will which the colonists felt towards the mother country, while the danger of French aggression drew them closely to it. Populous as they had become, the English settlements still lay mainly along the sea-board of the Atlantic. Only a few exploring parties had penetrated into the Alleghanies before the Seven Years' War; and Indian tribes wandered unquestioned along the lakes. It was by his success in winning over these tribes to an acknowledgment of the supremacy of France that Montcalm was drawn to the project of extending the French dominion over the broad plains of the Ohio and the Missouri from Canada to the Mississippi, and of cutting off the English colonies from all access to the West. The instinct of the settlers taught them that in such a project lay the death-blow of America's future greatness; the militia of the colonies marched with Braddock to his fatal defeat, and shared with the troops of Amherst the capture of Duquesne. The name of "Pittsburg," which they gave to their prize, still recalls the gratitude of the colonists to the statesman whose genius had rolled away the danger which threatened their destinies.

**George the Third.**

But strong as the attachment of the colonists to the mother country seemed at this moment, there were keen politicians who saw in the very completeness of Pitt's triumph a danger to their future union. The presence of the French in Canada had thrown the colonies on the protection of Great Britain. With the conquest of Canada their need of this protection was removed. For the moment, however, all thought of distant result was lost in the nearer fortunes of the war. In Germany the steady support of Pitt alone enabled Frederick to hold out against the terrible exhaustion of his unequal struggle. His campaign of 1760 indeed was one of the grandest efforts of his genius. Foiled in an attempt on Dresden, he again saved Silesia by his victory of Liegnitz and hurled back an advance of Daun by a victory at Torgau; while Ferdinand of Brunswick held his ground as of old along the Weser. But even victories drained Frederick's strength. Men and money alike failed him. It was impossible for him to strike another great blow, and the ring of enemies again closed slowly round him. His one remaining hope lay in the firm support of Pitt, and triumphant as his policy had been, Pitt was tottering to his fall. The envy and resentment of his colleagues at his undisguised supremacy found an unexpected supporter in the young sovereign who mounted the throne on the death of his grandfather in 1760. For the first and last time, since the accession of the House of Hanover England saw a king who was resolved to play a part in English politics; and the part which George the Third succeeded in playing was undoubtedly a memorable one. In ten years he reduced government to a shadow, and turned the loyalty of his subjects

Digitized by Google

into disaffection. In twenty he had forced the colonies of America into revolt and independence, and brought England to the brink of ruin. Work such as this has sometimes been done by very great men, and often by very wicked and profligate men; but George was neither profligate nor great. He had a smaller mind than any English king before him save James the Second. He was wretchedly educated, and his natural taste was of the meanest sort. "Was there ever such stuff," he asked, "as Shakspere?" Nor had he the capacity for using greater minds than his own by which some sovereigns have concealed their natural littleness. On the contrary, his only feeling towards great men was one of jealousy and hate. He longed for the time when "decrepitude or death" might put an end to Pitt, and even when death had freed him from "this trumpet of sedition," he denounced the proposal for a public monument as "an offensive measure to me personally." But dull and petty as his temper was, he was clear as to his purpose and obstinate in the pursuit of it. And his purpose was to rule. "George," his mother, the Princess of Wales, had continually repeated to him in youth, "George, be king." He called himself always "a Whig of the Revolution," and he had no wish to undo the work which he believed the Revolution to have done. His wish was not to govern against law, but simply to govern, to be freed from the dictation of parties and ministers, to be in effect the first minister of the State. How utterly incompatible such a dream was with the Parliamentary constitution of the country as it had received its final form from Sunderland we have already seen, but George was resolved to carry out his dream. And in carrying it out he was aided by the circumstances of the time. The defeat of Charles Edward and the later degradation of his life had worn away the thin coating of Jacobitism which clung to the Tories. They were ready again to take part in politics, and in the accession of a king who unlike his two predecessors was no stranger but an Englishman, who had been born in England and spoke English, they found the opportunity they desired. Their withdrawal from public affairs had left them untouched by the progress of political ideas since the Revolution of 1688, and they returned to invest the new sovereign with all the reverence which they had bestowed on the Stuarts. A "King's party" was thus ready made to his hand; but George was able to strengthen it by a vigorous exertion of the power and influence which was still left to the Crown. All promotion in the Church, all advancement in the army, a great number of places in the civil administration and about the court, were still at the King's disposal. If this vast mass of patronage had been practically usurped by the ministers of his predecessors, it was resumed and firmly held by George the Third; and the character of the House of Commons made patronage, as we have seen, a powerful engine in its management. George had one

Digitized by Google

SEC. II.
THE INDEPENDENCE OF AMERICA.
1761-1785.

of Walpole's weapons in his hands, and he used it with unscrupulous energy to break up the party which Walpole had held so long together. He saw that the Whigs were divided among themselves by the factious spirit which springs from a long hold of power, and that they were weakened by the rising contempt with which the country at large regarded the selfishness and corruption of its representatives. More than thirty years before, Gay had quizzed the leading statesmen of the day on the public stage under the guise of highwaymen and pickpockets. "It is difficult to determine," said the witty playwright, "whether the fine gentlemen imitate the gentlemen of the road, or the gentlemen of the road the fine gentlemen." And now that the "fine gentlemen" were represented by hoary jobbers such as Newcastle, the public contempt was fiercer than ever, and men turned sickened from the intrigues and corruption of party to the young sovereign who aired himself in the character which Bolinbroke had invented of a Patriot King.

**The Peace of Paris.**

Had Pitt and Newcastle held together, supported as the one was by the commercial classes and public opinion, the other by the Whig families and the whole machinery of Parliamentary management, George must have struggled in vain. But the ministry was already disunited. The Whigs, attached to peace by the traditions of Walpole, dismayed at the enormous expenditure, and haughty with the pride of a ruling oligarchy, were in silent revolt against the war and the supremacy of the Great Commoner. It was against their will that Pitt rejected proposals of peace from France on the terms of a desertion of Prussia. In 1761 he urged a new war with Spain. He had learnt the secret signature of a fresh family compact between the two Bourbon Courts of Spain and France, and he proposed to anticipate the blow by a seizure of the treasure fleet from the Indies, by occupying the Isthmus of Panama, and attacking the Spanish dominions in the New World. His colleagues shrank from plans so vast and daring: and Newcastle was spurred to revolt by the King and backed in it by the rest of the Whigs. It was in vain that Pitt enforced his threat of resignation by declaring himself responsible to "the people," or that the Londoners hung after his dismissal from office on his carriage wheels, hugged his footman, and even kissed his horses. The fall of the great statesman in October changed the whole look of European affairs. "Pitt disgraced," wrote a French philosopher,—"it is worth two victories to us!" Frederick on the other hand, was almost driven to despair. George saw in the great stateman's fall nothing but an opening for peace. He quickly availed himself of the weakness and unpopularity in which the ministry found itself involved after Pitt's departure to drive the Duke of Newcastle from office by a series of studied mortifications, and to place the Marquis of Bute at its head. Bute was a mere court favourite, with the abilities of a gentleman usher, but he

Digitized by Google

was willing to do the King's will, and the King's will was to end the war. Frederick, who still held his ground stubbornly against fate, was brought to the brink of ruin in the spring of 1762 by the withdrawal of the English subsidies. It was in fact only his wonderful resolution and the sudden change in the policy of Russia which followed on the death of his enemy the Czarina Elizabeth which enabled him to retire from the struggle in the Treaty of Hubertsberg, without the loss of an inch of territory. George and Lord Bute had already purchased peace at a very different price. With a shameless indifference to the national honour, they had even offered Silesia to Austria, and East Prussia to the Czarina, in return for a cessation of hostilities. Fortunately the issue of the strife with Spain saved England from such humiliation as this. Pitt's policy had been vindicated by a Spanish declaration of war three weeks after his fall; and the surrender of Cuba and the Philippines to a British fleet brought about the Peace of Paris in September 1762. England restored Martinique, the most important of her West Indian conquests, to France, and Cuba and the Philippines to Spain in return for the cession of Florida. Her real gains were in India and America. In the first the French abandoned all right to any military settlement: in the second they gave up Canada and Nova Scotia.

**The House of Commons.**

The anxiety which the young king showed for peace abroad sprang simply from his desire to begin the struggle for power at home. So long as the war lasted Pitt's return to office and the union of the Whigs under his guidance was an hourly danger. But with peace the King's hands were free. He could count on the dissensions of the Whigs, on the new-born loyalty of the Tories, on the influence of the Crown patronage which he had taken into his own hands; but what he counted on most of all was the character of the House of Commons. At a time when it had become all-powerful in the State, when government hung simply on its will, the House of Commons had ceased in any real and effective sense to represent the Commons at all. The changes in the distribution of seats which were called for by the natural shiftings of population and wealth since the days of Edward the First had been recognized as early as the Civil Wars; but the reforms of the Long Parliament were cancelled at the Restoration. From the time of Charles the Second to that of George the Third not a single effort had been made to meet the growing abuses of our parliamentary system. Great towns like Manchester or Birmingham remained without a member, while members still sat for boroughs which, like Old Sarum, had actually vanished from the face of the earth. The effort of the Tudor sovereigns to establish a Court party in the House by a profuse creation of boroughs, most of which were mere villages then in the hands of the Crown, had ended in the appropriation of these seats by the neighbouring landowners, who

Digitized by Google

bought and sold them as they sold their own estates. Even in towns which had a real claim to representation, the narrowing of municipal privileges ever since the fourteenth century to a small part of the inhabitants, and in many cases the restriction of electoral rights to the members of the governing corporation, rendered their representation a mere name. The choice of such places hung simply on the purse or influence of politicians. Some were "the King's boroughs," others obediently returned nominees of the Ministry of the day, others were "close boroughs" in the hands of jobbers like the Duke of Newcastle, who at one time returned a third of all the borough members in the House. The counties and the great commercial towns could alone be said to exercise any real right of suffrage, though the enormous expense of contesting such constituencies practically left their representation in the hands of the great local families. But even in the counties the suffrage was ridiculously limited and unequal. Out of a population in fact of eight millions of English people, only a hundred and sixty thousand were electors at all.

**The House and the Crown.**

How far such a House was from really representing English opinion we see from the fact that in the height of his popularity Pitt could hardly find a seat in it. When he did find one, it was at the hands of a great borough-jobber, Lord Clive. Purchase was the real means of entering Parliament. Seats were bought and sold in the open market at a price which rose to four thousand pounds, and we can hardly wonder that the younger Pitt cried indignantly at a later time, "This House is not the representative of the People of Great Britain. It is the representative of nominal boroughs, of ruined and exterminated towns, of noble families, of wealthy individuals, of foreign potentates." The meanest motives naturally told on a body returned by such constituencies, cut off from the influence of public opinion by the secrecy of Parliamentary proceedings, and yet invested with almost boundless authority. Newcastle had made bribery and borough-jobbing the base of the power of the Whigs. George the Third seized it in his turn as the base of the power he purposed to give to the Crown. The royal revenue was employed to buy seats and to buy votes. Day by day, George himself scrutinized the voting-list of the two Houses, and distributed rewards and punishments as members voted according to his will or no. Promotion in the civil service, preferment in the Church, rank in the army was reserved for "the King's friends." Pensions and court places were used to influence debates. Bribery was employed on a scale never known before. Under Bute's ministry an office was opened at the Treasury for the bribery of members, and twenty-five thousand pounds are said to have been spent in a single day.

**Fall of Bute.**

The result of these measures was seen in the tone of the very Parliament which had till now bowed beneath the greatness of Pitt.

Digitized by Google

In the teeth of his denunciations the Peace was approved by a majority of five to one. "Now indeed my son is king!" cried the Princess Dowager. But the victory was far from being won yet. So long as the sentiment of the House of Commons had fairly represented that of the nation at large, England had cared little for its abuses or its corruption. But the defeat of the Great Commoner disclosed the existence of a danger of which it had never dreamed. The country found itself powerless in the face of a body which wielded the supreme authority in its name, but which had utterly ceased to be its representative. It looked on helplessly while the King, by sheer dint of corruption, turned the House which was the guardian of public rights into a means of governing at his will. Parliament was the constitutional expression of public opinion, and now public opinion was without the means of uttering itself in Parliament. The natural result followed. The early years of George the Third were distinguished by a public discontent, by political agitation and disturbances, such as have never been known since. Bute found himself the object of a detestation so sudden and so universal in its outbreak as to force him to resign in 1763. The King, as frightened as his minister, saw that the time had not yet come for ruling by his own adherents alone, and appealed for aid to Pitt. But though he had been betrayed by Newcastle and his followers, Pitt saw clearly that without the support of the whole Whig party a minister would be, as Bute had been, a tool of the Crown; and he made the return of all its sections to office a condition of his own. George refused to comply with terms which would have defeated his designs; and he was able to save himself from submission by skilfully using the division which was rending the Whig camp into two opposite forces. The bulk of it, with Lord Rockingham and the Cavendishes at its head, leant to Pitt and to the sympathy of the commercial classes. A smaller part, under George Grenville and the Duke of Bedford, retained the narrow and selfish temper of a mere oligarchy, in whom greed of power overmastered every other feeling. In an evil hour George threw himself on the support of the last.

**Quarrel with the Press.**

Of what moment his choice had been he was soon to learn. With Grenville's ministry began the political power of the Press and the struggle with America. The opinion of the country no sooner found itself unrepresented in Parliament than it sought an outlet in the Press. We have already noted the early history of English journalism, its rise under the Commonwealth, the censorship which fettered it, and the removal of this censorship after the Revolution. Under the two first Georges, its progress was hindered by the absence of great topics for discussion, the worthlessness of its writers, and above all the political lethargy of the time. It was in fact not till the accession of George the Third that the impulse which Pitt had given to the

Digitized by Google

SEC. II.
THE INDEPENDENCE OF AMERICA.
1761-1785.

national spirit and the rise of a keener interest in politics raised the Press into a political power. The new force of public opinion found in it a court of political appeal from the House of Commons. The journals became mouthpieces for that outburst of popular hatred which drove Lord Bute from office in the teeth of his unbroken majority. The *North Briton*, a journal written by John Wilkes, denounced the Peace with peculiar bitterness, and ventured for the first time to attack a minister by name. Wilkes was a worthless profligate, but he had a remarkable power of enlisting popular sympathy on his side, and by a singular irony of fortune he became the chief instrument in bringing about three of the greatest advances which our constitution has ever made. At a later time he woke the nation to a conviction of the need for Parliamentary reform by his defence of the rights of constituencies against the despotism of the House of Commons, and took the lead in the struggle which put an end to the secrecy of Parliamentary proceedings. The prosecution of his *North Briton* in 1764 first established the right of the Press to discuss public affairs. Wilkes was sent to prison on a "general warrant" from the Secretary of State. The legality of such a mode of arbitrary arrest by an officer of state, on a warrant which did not name the person to be arrested and which was not issued by a magistrate, was at once questioned, and no such warrant has ever been issued since. A writ of *habeas corpus* freed Wilkes from prison, but he was soon prosecuted for libel, and the House of Commons condemned the paper, which was still before the civil courts, as a "false, scandalous, and seditious libel." The House of Lords at the same time voted a pamphlet found among Wilkes's papers to be blasphemous, and advised a prosecution. Wilkes fled to France, and was soon expelled from the House of Commons. But the assumption of an arbitrary judicial power by both Houses, and the system of terror which Grenville put in force against the Press by issuing two hundred injunctions against different journals, roused a storm of indignation throughout the country. Every street resounded with cries of "Wilkes and Liberty." Bold as he was, Grenville dared go no further; and six years later, the failure of the prosecution directed against an anonymous journalist named "Junius" for his Letter to the King established the right of the Press to criticize the conduct not of ministers or Parliament only, but of the sovereign himself.

**The Stamp Act.**

The same recklessness which was shown by Grenville in his struggle with the Press was shown in his struggle with the American colonies. Pitt had waged war with characteristic profusion and defrayed its expenses by enormous loans. The public debt now stood at a hundred and forty millions, and the first work of the Grenville Ministry was to make provision for the new burthens the nation had incurred. As the burthen had been partly incurred in the defence of the American colonies, Grenville resolved that the colonies should bear

Digitized by Google

their share of it. He raised the import duties at colonial ports. To deal with external commerce was generally held to be an unquestioned right of the mother country: and irritated as they were by these changes, the colonists submitted to them. A far heavier blow was dealt at their commerce by the rigid enforcement of the laws which restricted colonial trade to British ports, and the suppression of the illicit trade which had grown up with the Spanish settlements. The measure was a harsh and unwise one, but it was legal, and could only be resented by a general pledge to use no British manufactures. But the next scheme of the Minister, his proposal to introduce internal taxation within the bounds of the colony itself by reviving the scheme of an excise or stamp duty which Walpole's good sense had rejected, was met in another spirit. Taxation and representation, the colonists held, went hand in hand. America had no representatives in the British Parliament. The representatives of the colonists met in their own colonial Assemblies, and these were willing to grant supplies of a yet larger amount than a stamp-tax would produce. With this protest and offer they despatched Benjamin Franklin, who had risen from his position of a working printer in Philadelphia to high repute among scientific discoverers, as their agent to England. But his remonstrances only kindled Grenville's obstinacy, and the Stamp Act was passed in 1765. Franklin saw no other course for the colonies than submission, but submission was the last thing which the colonists dreamed of. The Northern and Southern States were drawn together by the new danger. The Assembly of Virginia was the first to formally deny the right of the British Parliament to meddle with internal taxation, and to demand the repeal of the Act. Massachusetts not only adopted the denial and the demand as its own, but proposed a Congress of delegates from all the colonial Assemblies to provide for common and united action. In October 1765 this Congress met to repeat the protest and petition of Virginia.

**Repeal of the Stamp Act.**

For the moment this unexpected danger seemed to raise English politics out of the chaos of faction and intrigue into which they were sinking. Not only had the Ministry incurred the hatred of the people, but the arrogance of Grenville had earned the resentment of the King. George again offered power to William Pitt. But Pitt stood almost alone. The silence of Newcastle and the Rockingham party while the war and his past policy was censured in Parliament had estranged him from the only section of the Whigs which could have acted with him: and the one friend who remained to him, his brother-in-law, Lord Temple, refused to aid in an attempt to construct a Cabinet. The King had no resource but to turn to the Marquis of Rockingham and the Whig party which he headed, but Rockingham had hardly taken office in July 1765 when the startling news came from America that Congress had resolved on resistance. Its reso-

Digitized by Google

SEC. II.
THE INDEPENDENCE OF AMERICA
1761-1785.

lution had been followed by action. No sooner had the stamps for the new Excise arrived in Boston than they were seized and held in custody by the magistrates of the town. The news at once called Pitt to the front. As a Minister he had long since rejected a similar scheme for taxing the colonies. He had been ill and absent from Parliament when the Stamp Act was passed, but he adopted to the full the constitutional claim of America. He gloried in the resistance which was denounced in Parliament as rebellion. "In my opinion," he said, "this kingdom has no right to lay a tax on the colonies. . . America is obstinate! America is almost in open rebellion! Sir, I rejoice that America has resisted. Three millions of people so dead to all the feelings of liberty as voluntarily to submit to be slaves would have been fit instruments to make slaves of the rest." His words determined the action of the timid Ministry, and in spite of the resistance of the King and the "King's friends" the Stamp Act was formally repealed in 1766. But the doctrine he had laid down was as formally repudiated by a Declaratory Act passed at the same time which asserted the supreme power of Parliament over the colonies "in all cases whatsoever."

**The Chatham Ministry.**

From this moment the Ministry was unable to stand against the general sense that the first man in the country should be its ruler. Pitt's aim was still to unite the Whig party, and though forsaken by Lord Temple, he succeeded to a great extent in the administration which he formed in the summer of 1766. Rockingham indeed refused office, but the bulk of his fellow Ministers remained, and they were reinforced by the few friends who clung to Pitt. In his zeal to bring all parties together, even some of the Court party were admitted to minor offices in the administration, a step which won the warm approbation of the King as likely to destroy "all party distinctions." Never had the hopes of a wise and noble government been stronger, and never were they fated to be more signally foiled. The life of the Ministry lay in Pitt, in his immense popularity, and in the command which his eloquence gave him over the House of Commons. His acceptance of the Earldom of Chatham removed him to the House of Lords, and for a while ruined the confidence which his reputation for unselfishness had aided him to win. But it was from no vulgar ambition that Pitt laid down his title of the Great Commoner. It was the consciousness of failing strength which made him dread the storms of debate, and in a few months the dread became a certainty. A painful and overwhelming illness, the result of nervous disorganization, withdrew him from public affairs; and his withdrawal robbed his colleagues of all vigour or union. The plans which Chatham had set on foot for the better government of Ireland, the transfer of India from the Company to the Crown, and the formation of a Northern Alliance with Prussia and Russia to balance the Family Compact of

Digitized by Google

the House of Bourbon, were suffered to drop. The one aim of the Ministry was to exist. It sought strength by the readmission of George Grenville and the Bedford party to office, but this practical abandonment of the policy of Pitt was soon followed by the retirement of his friends and of the chief of the Rockingham Whigs. A series of changes which it is needless to recount in detail left it practically a joint Ministry of the worst faction of the Whigs and of the new party which had been slowly gathering strength under the name of the King's friends. In spite however of the worthlessness and mediocrity of its members, this Ministry lasted under the successive guidance of the Duke of Grafton and Lord North for nearly eight years, from 1768 to the close of the American war.

**The King's Ministry.**

Its strength lay in the disorganization of the Whig party and the steady support of the King. George the Third had at last reached his aim. Pitt was discredited and removed for a time from the stage. The Whigs under Rockingham were fatally divided both from him and from the Bedford party. If the Bedfords were again in office it was on the condition of doing the King's will. Their Parliamentary support lay in the Tories and the "King's friends," who looked for direction to George himself. In the early days of the Ministry his influence was felt to be predominant. In its later and more disastrous days it was supreme, for Lord North, who became the head of the Ministry on Grafton's retirement in 1770, was the mere mouthpiece of the King. "Not only did he direct the Minister," a careful observer tells us, "in all important matters of foreign and domestic policy, but he instructed him as to the management of debates in Parliament, suggested what motions should be made or opposed, and how measures should be carried. He reserved for himself all the patronage, he arranged the whole cast of the administration, settled the relative place and pretensions of ministers of state, law officers, and members of the household, nominated and promoted the English and Scotch judges, appointed and translated bishops and deans, and dispensed other preferments in the Church. He disposed of military governments, regiments, and commissions, and himself ordered the marching of troops. He gave and refused titles, honours, and pensions." All this immense patronage was steadily used for the creation and maintenance of a party in both Houses of Parliament attached to the King himself; and its weight was seen in the dependence to which the new Ministry was reduced. George was in fact sole Minister during the eight years which followed; and the shame of the darkest hour of English history lies wholly at his door.

**Wilkes and Parliament.**

Again, as in 1763, the Government which he directed plunged at his instigation into a struggle with opinion at home and with the colonists of America. The attempt of the House of Commons to gag the Press and to transform itself into a supreme court of justice had been prac-

Digitized by Google

tically foiled. It now began the most daring attack ever made, by a body professing to be representative, on the rights of those whom it represented. In 1768 Wilkes returned from France and was elected member for Middlesex, a county the large number of whose voters made its choice a real expression of public opinion. The choice of Wilkes was in effect a public condemnation of the House of Commons. The Ministry shrank from a fresh struggle with the agitator, but the King was eager for the contest. "I think it highly expedient to apprise you," he wrote to Lord North, "that the expulsion of Mr. Wilkes appears to be very essential, and must be effected." The Ministers and the House of Commons bowed to his will. By his non-appearance in court when charged with libel Wilkes had become an outlaw, and he was now thrown into prison on his outlawry. Dangerous riots broke out in London and over the whole country; but the Government persevered. In 1769 the House of Commons expelled Wilkes as a libeller. He was at once re-elected by the shire of Middlesex. Violent and oppressive as the course of the House of Commons had been, it had as yet acted within its strict right, for no one questioned its possession of a right of expulsion. But the defiance of Middlesex led it now to go further. It resolved, "That Mr. Wilkes having been in this session of Parliament expelled the House, was and is incapable of being elected a member to serve in the present Parliament;" and it issued a writ for a fresh election. Middlesex answered this insolent claim to limit the free choice of a constituency by again returning Wilkes; and the House was driven by its anger to a fresh and more outrageous usurpation. It again expelled the member for Middlesex, and on his return for the third time by an immense majority, it voted that the candidate whom he had defeated, Colonel Luttrell, ought to have been returned, and was the legal representative of Middlesex. The Commons had not only limited at their own arbitrary discretion the free election of the constituency, but they had transferred its rights to themselves by seating Luttrell as member in defiance of the deliberate choice of Wilkes by the freeholders of Middlesex. The country at once rose indignantly against this violation of constitutional law. Wilkes was elected an Alderman of London; and the Mayor, Aldermen, and Livery petitioned the King to dissolve the Parliament. A remonstrance from London and Westminster said boldly that "there is a time when it is clearly demonstrable that men cease to be representatives. That time is now arrived. The House of Commons do not represent the people." Junius, an anonymous writer, attacked the Government in letters, which, rancorous and unscrupulous as was their tone, gave a new power to the literature of the Press by their clearness and terseness of statement, the finish of their style, and the terrible vigour of their invective.

**Parliamentary Reform.**

The storm, however, beat idly on the obstinacy of the King. Junius

Digitized by Google

was prosecuted, and the petitions and remonstrances of London haughtily rejected. At the beginning of 1770 however a cessation of the disease which had long held him prostrate enabled Chatham to reappear in the House of Lords. He at once denounced the usurpations of the Commons, and brought in a bill to declare them illegal. But his genius made him the first to see that remedies of this sort were inadequate to meet evils which really sprang from the fact that the House of Commons no longer represented the people of England. He brought forward a plan for its reform by an increase of the county members. Further he could not go, for even in the proposals he made he stood almost alone. Even the Whigs under Lord Rockingham had no sympathy with Parliamentary reform. They shrank with haughty disdain from the popular agitation in which public opinion was forced to express itself, and which Chatham, while censuring its extravagance, deliberately encouraged. It is from the quarrels between Wilkes and the House of Commons that we may date the influence of public meetings on English politics. The gatherings of the Middlesex electors in his support were preludes to the great meetings of Yorkshire freeholders in which the question of Parliamentary reform rose into importance; and it was in the movement for reform, and the establishment of corresponding committees throughout the country for the purpose of promoting it, that the power of political agitation first made itself felt. Political societies and clubs took their part in the creation and organization of public opinion: and the spread of discussion, as well as the influence which now began to be exercised by the appearance of vast numbers of men in support of any political movement, proved that Parliament would soon have to reckon with the sentiments of the people at large.

**Power of the Press.**

But an agent far more effective than popular agitation was preparing to bring the force of public opinion to bear on Parliament itself. We have seen how much of the corruption of the House of Commons sprang from the secrecy of Parliamentary proceedings, but the secrecy was the harder to preserve as the nation woke to a greater interest in its own affairs. From the accession of the Georges imperfect reports of the more important discussions began to be published under the title of "The Senate of Lilliput," and with feigned names or simple initials to denote the speaker. Obtained by stealth and often merely recalled by memory, these reports were naturally inaccurate; and their inaccuracy was eagerly seized on as a pretext for enforcing the rules which guarded the secrecy of proceedings in Parliament. In 1771 the Commons issued a proclamation forbidding the publication of debates; and six printers, who set it at defiance, were summoned to the bar of the House. One who refused to appear was arrested by its messenger; but the arrest at once brought the House into conflict with the magistrates of London. They set aside the proclamation as without legal force, released

Digitized by Google

the printers, and sent the messenger to prison for an unlawful arrest. The House sent the Lord Mayor to the Tower, but the cheers of the crowds which followed him on his way told that public opinion was again with the Press, and the attempt to hinder its publication of Parliamentary proceedings dropped silently on his release at the next prorogation. Few changes of equal importance have been so quietly brought about. Not only was the responsibility of members to their constituents made constant and effective by the publication of their proceedings, but the nation itself was called in to assist in the deliberations of its representatives. A new and wider interest in its own affairs was roused in the people at large, and a new political education was given to it through the discussion of every subject of national importance in the Houses and the Press. Public opinion, as gathered up and represented on all its sides by the journals of the day, became a force in practical statesmanship, influenced the course of debates, and controlled in a closer and more constant way than even Parliament itself had been able to do the actions of the Government. The importance of its new position gave a weight to the Press which it had never had before. The first great English journals date from this time. With the *Morning Chronicle*, the *Morning Post*, the *Morning Herald*, and the *Times*, all of which appeared in the interval between the opening years of the American War and the beginning of the war with the French Revolution, journalism took a new tone of responsibility and intelligence. The hacks of Grub Street were superseded by publicists of a high moral temper and literary excellence; and philosophers like Coleridge or statesmen like Canning turned to influence public opinion through the columns of the Press.

**George III. and America.**

But as yet these influences were feebly felt, and George the Third was able to set Chatham's protests disdainfully aside, and to plunge into a contest far more disastrous for the fortunes of England. In all the wretched chaos of the last few years, what had galled him most had been the one noble act which averted a war between England and her colonies. To the King the Americans were already "rebels," and the great statesman whose eloquence had made their claims irresistible was a "trumpet of sedition." George deplored, in his correspondence with Lord North, the repeal of the Stamp Act. "All men feel," he wrote, "that the fatal compliance in 1766 has increased the pretensions of the Americans to absolute independence." In America itself the news of the repeal had been received with universal joy, and taken as a close of the strife. But on both sides there remained a pride and irritability which only wise handling could have allayed; and in the present state of English politics wise handling was impossible. No sooner had the illness of Lord Chatham removed him from any real share in public affairs than the wretched administration which still bore his name suspended the Assembly of New York on its refusal to

Digitized by Google

provide quarters for English troops, and resolved to assert British sovereignty by levying import duties of trivial amount at American ports. The Assembly of Massachusetts was dissolved on a trifling quarrel with its Governor, and Boston was occupied for a time by British soldiers. The remonstrances of the Legislatures of Massachusetts and Virginia, however, coupled with a fall in the funds, warned the Ministers of the dangerous course on which they had entered; and in 1769 the troops were withdrawn, and all duties, save that on tea, abandoned. A series of petty quarrels went on in almost every colony between the popular Assemblies and the Governors appointed by the Crown, and the colonists persevered in their agreement to import nothing from the mother country. But for three years there was no prospect of serious strife. In America the influence of George Washington allayed the irritation of Virginia. Massachusetts contented itself with quarrelling with the Governor and refusing to buy tea so long as the duty was levied. In England, even Grenville, though approving the retention of the duty in question, abandoned all dream of further taxation. But the King was supreme, and the fixed purpose of the King was to seize on the first opportunity of undoing the "fatal compliance of 1766."

**The Boston Tea-Ships.**

A trivial riot gave him the handle he wanted. He had insisted on the tea duty being retained when the rest were withdrawn, and in December 1773 the arrival of some English ships laden with tea kindled fresh irritation in Boston, where the non-importation agreement was strictly enforced. A mob in the disguise of Indians boarded the vessels and flung their contents into the sea. The outrage was deplored alike by the friends of America in England and by its own leading statesmen; and both Washington and Chatham were prepared to support the Government in its looked-for demand of redress. But the thought of the King was not of redress but of repression, and he set roughly aside the more conciliatory proposals of Lord North and his fellow-ministers. They had already rejected as "frivolous and vexatious" a petition of the Assembly of Massachusetts for the dismissal of two public officers whose letters home advised the withdrawal of free institutions from the colonies. They now seized on the riot as a pretext for rigorous measures. A bill introduced into Parliament in the beginning of 1774 punished Boston by closing its port against all commerce. Another punished the State of Massachusetts by withdrawing the liberties it had enjoyed ever since the Pilgrim Fathers landed on its soil. Its charter was altered. The choice of its Council was transferred from the people to the Crown, and the nomination of its judges was transferred to the Governor. In the Governor, too, by a provision more outrageous than even these, was vested the right of sending all persons charged with a share in the late disturbances to England for trial. To enforce these measures of repression troops were sent to America, and General Gage, the com-



Digitized by Google

mander-in-chief there, was appointed Governor of Massachusetts. The King's exultation at the prospect before him was unbounded. "The die," he wrote triumphantly to his Minister, "is cast. The colonies must either triumph or submit." Four regiments would be enough to bring Americans to their senses. They would only be "lions while we are lambs." "If we take the resolute part," he decided solemnly, "they will undoubtedly be very meek." Unluckily, the blow at Massachusetts was received with anything but meekness. The jealousies between State and State were hushed by the sense that the liberties of all were in danger. If the British Parliament could cancel the charter of Massachusetts and ruin the trade of Boston, it could cancel the charter of every colony and ruin the trade of every port from the St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico. All, therefore, adopted the cause of Massachusetts; and all their Legislatures, save that of Georgia, sent delegates to a Congress which assembled on the 4th of September at Philadelphia. Massachusetts took a yet bolder course. Not a citizen would act under the new laws. Its Assembly met in defiance of the Governor, called out the militia of the State, and provided arms and ammunition for it. But there was still room for reconciliation. The resolutions of the Congress had been moderate; for Virginia was the wealthiest and most influential among the States who sent delegates; and Virginia under Washington's guidance, though resolute to resist the new measures of the Government, still clung to the mother country. At home, the merchants of London and Bristol pleaded loudly for reconciliation; and in January 1775 Chatham again came forward to avert the strife he had once before succeeded in preventing. With characteristic grandeur of feeling he set aside all half-measures or proposals of compromise. "It is not cancelling a piece of parchment," he insisted, "that can win back America: you must respect her fears and her resentments." The bill which he introduced in concert with Franklin provided for the repeal of the late Acts and for the security of the colonial charters, abandoned the claim to taxation, and ordered the recall of the troops. A colonial Assembly was directed to assemble and provide means by which America might contribute towards the payment of the public debt.

**The Independence of America.**

The contemptuous rejection of Chatham's measure began the great struggle which ended eight years later in the severance of the American Colonies from the British Crown. The Congress of delegates from the Colonial Legislatures at once voted measures for general defence, ordered the levy of an army, and set George Washington at its head. No nobler figure ever stood in the forefront of a nation's life. Washington was grave and courteous in address; his manners were simple and unpretending; his silence and the serene calmness of his temper spoke of a perfect self-mastery; but there was little in his outer bearing to reveal the grandeur of soul which lifts his figure, with

Digitized by Google

all the simple majesty of an ancient statue, out of the smaller passions, the meaner impulses of the world around him. What recommended him for command as yet was simply his weight among his fellow landowners of Virginia, and the experience of war which he had gained by service in Braddock's luckless expedition against Fort Duquesne. It was only as the weary fight went on that the colonists learnt little by little the greatness of their leader, his clear judgment, his heroic endurance, his silence under difficulties, his calmness in the hour of danger or defeat, the patience with which he waited, the quickness and hardness with which he struck, the lofty and serene sense of duty that never swerved from its task through resentment or jealousy, that never through war or peace felt the touch of a meaner ambition, that knew no aim save that of guarding the freedom of his fellow countrymen, and no personal longing save that of returning to his own fireside when their freedom was secured. It was almost unconsciously that men learnt to cling to Washington with a trust and faith such as few other men have won, and to regard him with a reverence which still hushes us in presence of his memory. Even America hardly recognized his real grandeur till death set its seal on "the man first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his fellow countrymen." Washington, more than any of his fellow colonists, represented the clinging of the Virginian landowners to the mother country, and his acceptance of the command proved that even the most moderate among them had no hope now save in arms. The struggle opened with a skirmish between a party of English troops and a detachment of militia at Lexington, and in a few days twenty thousand colonists appeared before Boston. The Congress re-assembled, declared the States they represented "The United Colonies of America," and undertook the work of government. Meanwhile ten thousand fresh troops landed at Boston; but the provincial militia seized the neck of ground which joins it to the mainland, and though they were driven from the heights of Bunker's Hill which commanded the town, it was only after a desperate struggle in which their bravery put an end for ever to the taunts of cowardice which had been levelled against the colonists. "Are the Yankees cowards?" shouted the men of Massachusetts, as the first English attack rolled back baffled down the hill-side. But a far truer courage was shown in the stubborn endurance with which sixteen thousand raw militiamen, who gradually dwindled to ten, ill fed and ill armed, with but forty-five rounds of ammunition to each man, cooped up through the winter, under Washington's command, a force of ten thousand veterans in the lines of Boston till the spring of 1776 saw them withdraw from the city to New York, where the whole British army, largely reinforced by mercenaries from Germany, was concentrated under General Howe. Meanwhile a raid of the American General Arnold nearly drove the British troops from Canada; and though his attempt



Digitized by Google

broke down before Quebec, it showed that all hope of reconciliation was over. The colonies of the south, the last to join in the struggle, expelled their Governors at the close of 1775. This decisive step was followed by the great act with which American history begins, the adoption on the 4th of July, 1776, by the delegates in Congress of the Declaration of Independence. "We," ran its solemn words, "the representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, solemnly publish and declare that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, Free and Independent States."

**Death of Chatham.**

The triumph of the colonies was soon followed by suffering and defeat. Howe, an active general with a fine army at his back, cleared Long Island in August by a victory at Brooklyn; and Washington, whose army was weakened by withdrawals and defeat, and disheartened by the loyal tone of the State in which it was encamped, was forced to evacuate New York and New Jersey, and to fall back, first on the Hudson and then on the Delaware. The Congress prepared to fly from Philadelphia, and a general despair showed itself in cries of peace. But a well-managed surprise at Trenton, and a daring march on the rear of Howe's army at Princetown restored the spirits of Washington's men, and forced the English general in his turn to fall back on New York. The spring of 1777 opened with a combined effort for the suppression of the revolt. An army assembled in Canada under General Burgoyne marched by way of the Lakes to seize the line of the Hudson, and with help from the army at New York to cut off New England from her sister provinces. Howe meanwhile sailed up the Chesapeake, and marched on Philadelphia, the temporary capital of the United States and the seat of the Congress. The rout of his little army of seven thousand men at Brandywine forced Washington to abandon Philadelphia, and after a bold but unsuccessful attack on his victors at Germanstown to retire into winter quarters on the banks of the Schuylkill. The unconquerable resolve with which he nerved his handful of beaten and half-starved troops in their camp at Valley Forge to face Howe's army through the winter is the noblest of Washington's triumphs. But in the north the war had taken another colour. When Burgoyne appeared on the Upper Hudson he found the road to Albany barred by an American force under General Gates. The spirit of New England, which had grown dull as the war rolled away from its borders, quickened again at the news of invasion and of the outrages committed by the Indians whom Burgoyne employed among his troops. Its militia hurried from town and homestead to the camp; and after a fruitless attack on the American lines, Burgoyne saw himself surrounded on the heights of Saratoga. On the 13th of October he was compelled to surrender. The news of this terrible calamity gave force to the words with which Chatham at the very time of the

Digitized by Google

surrender was pressing for peace. "You cannot conquer America," he cried when men were glorying in Howe's successes. "If I were an American as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my country, I never would lay down my arms, never, never, never!" Then, in a burst of indignant eloquence he thundered against the use of the Indian and his scalping-knife as allies of England against her children. The proposals which Chatham brought forward might perhaps, in his hands, even yet have brought America and the mother country together. His plan was one of absolute conciliation, and of a federal union between the settlements and Great Britain which would have left the colonies absolutely their own masters in all matters of internal government and linked only by ties of affection and loyalty to the general body of the Empire. But it met with the same fate as his previous proposals. Its rejection was at once followed by the news of Saratoga, and by the yet more fatal news that the disaster had roused the Bourbon Courts to avenge the humiliation of the Seven Years' War. In February 1778 France concluded an alliance with the States, and that of Spain followed after a year's delay. Even in the minds of the Ministers themselves all hope of conquering America had disappeared. The King indeed was as obstinate for war as ever; and the country, stung by its great humiliation, sent fifteen thousand men to the ranks of the army. But even the King's influence broke down before the general despair. Lord North carried through Parliament bills which conceded to America all she had originally claimed. The Duke of Richmond and a large number of the Whigs openly advocated the acknowledgment of American independence. If a hope still remained of retaining the friendship of the colonies and of baffling the efforts of France and Spain, it lay in Lord Chatham, and in spite of the King's resistance the voice of the whole country called him back to power. But on the eve of his return to office this last chance was shattered by the hand of death. The day for which George the Third only two years before had longed was come. Broken with age and disease, the Earl was borne to the House of Lords on the 7th of April, and uttered in a few broken words his protest against the proposal to surrender America. "His Majesty," he murmured, "succeeded to an Empire as great in extent as its reputation was unsullied. Seventeen years ago this people was the terror of the world." Then falling back in a swoon, he was borne home to die.

**Progress of the War**

From the hour of Chatham's death England entered on a conflict with enemies whose circle gradually widened till she stood single-handed against the world. In 1778, France and Spain were leagued with America against her. Their joint fleet of sixty ships rode the masters of the Channel, and threatened a descent on the English coast. But dead as Chatham was, his cry woke a new life in England.

Digitized by Google

"Shall we fall prostrate," he exclaimed with his last breath, "before the House of Bourbon?" and the divisions which had broken the nation in its struggle with American liberty vanished at a threat of French invasion. The weakness of the Ministry was compensated by the heroic energy of the nation itself. For three years, from 1779 to 1782, General Elliot held against famine and bombardment the rock fortress of Gibraltar. Although a quarrel over the right of search banded Holland and the Courts of the North in an armed neutrality against her, and added the Dutch fleet to the number of her assailants, England held her own at sea. Even in America the fortune of the war seemed to turn. After Burgoyne's surrender the English generals had withdrawn from Pennsylvania, and bent all their efforts on the south where a strong Royalist party still existed. The capture of Charleston and the successes of Lord Cornwallis in 1780 were rendered fruitless by the obstinate resistance of General Greene; but the States were weakened by bankruptcy and unnerved by hopes of aid from France. Meanwhile the losses of England in the West were all but compensated by new triumphs in the East.

**England and India.**

Since the day of Plassey, India had been fast passing into the hands of the merchant company whose traders but a few years before held only three petty factories along its coast. The victory which laid Bengal at the feet of Clive had been followed in 1760 by a victory at Wandewash, in which Colonel Coote's defeat of Lally, the French Governor of Pondicherry, established British supremacy over Southern India. The work of organization had soon to follow on that of conquest; for the tyranny and corruption of the merchant-clerks who suddenly found themselves lifted into rulers was fast ruining the province of Bengal; and although Clive had profited more than any other by the spoils of his victory, he saw that the time had come when greed must give way to the responsibilities of power. In 1765 he returned to India, and the two years of his rule were in fact the most glorious years in his life. In the teeth of opposition from every clerk and of mutiny throughout the army, he put down the private trading of the Company's servants and forbade their acceptance of gifts from the natives. Clive set an example of disinterestedness by handing over to public uses a legacy which had been left him by the prince he had raised to the throne of Bengal; and returned poorer than he went to face the storm his acts had roused among those who were interested in Indian abuses at home. His unsparing denunciations of the misgovernment of Bengal at last stirred even Lord North to interfere; and when the financial distress of the Company drove it for aid to Government, the grant of aid was coupled with measures of administrative reform. The Regulation Act of 1773 established a Governor-General and a Supreme Court of Judicature for all British possessions in India, prohibited judges and members of Council from

Digitized by Google

trading, forbade any receipt of presents from natives, and ordered that every act of the Directors should be signified to the Government to be approved or disallowed. The new interest which had been aroused in the subject of India was seen in an investigation of the whole question of its administration by a Committee of the House of Commons. Clive's own early acts were examined with unsparing severity. His bitter complaint in the Lords that, Baron of Plassey as he was, he had been arraigned like a sheep-stealer, failed to prevent the passing of resolutions which censured the corruption and treachery of the early days of British rule in India. Here, however, the justice of the House stopped. When his accusers passed from the censure of Indian misgovernment to the censure of Clive himself, the memory of his great deeds won from the House of Commons a unanimous vote, "That Robert Lord Clive did at the same time render great and meritorious services to his country."

**Warren Hastings.**

By the Act of 1773 Warren Hastings was named Governor-General of the three presidencies. Hastings was sprung of a noble family which had long fallen into decay, and poverty had driven him in boyhood to accept a writership in the Company's service. Clive, whose quick eye discerned his merits, drew him after Plassey into political life; and the administrative ability he showed, during the disturbed period which followed, raised him step by step to the post of Governor of Bengal. No man could have been better fitted to discharge the duties of the new office which the Government at home had created without a thought of its real greatness. Hastings was gifted with rare powers of organization and control. His first measure was to establish the direct rule of the Company over Bengal by abolishing the government of its native princes, which, though it had become nominal, hindered all plans for effective administration. The Nabob sank into a pensionary, and the Company's new province was roughly but efficiently organized. Out of the clerks and traders about him Hastings formed that body of public servants which still remains the noblest product of our rule in India. The system of law and finance which he devised, hasty and imperfect as it necessarily was, was far superior to any that India had ever seen. Corruption he put down with as firm a hand as Clive's, but he won the love of the new "civilians" as he won the love of the Hindoos. Although he raised the revenue of Bengal and was able to send home every year a surplus of half a million to the Company, he did this without laying a fresh burden on the natives or losing their good will. His government was guided by an intimate knowledge of and sympathy with the people. At a time when their tongue was looked on simply as a medium of trade and business, Hastings was skilled in the languages of India, he was versed in native customs, and familiar with native feeling. We can hardly wonder that his popularity with the Bengalees was such as no later ruler has

Digitized by Google

SEC. II.
THE INDEPENDENCE OF AMERICA.
1761-1785.
India in the American War.

ever attained, or that after a century of great events Indian mothers still hush their infants with the name of Warren Hastings.

With Hastings began the conscious and deliberate purpose of subjecting India to the British Crown. As yet, though English influence was great in the south, Bengal alone was directly in English hands. The policy of Warren Hastings looked forward to a time when England should be absolute mistress of the whole of Hindostan, from Ceylon to the Himalayas. For this he bound native princes, as in Oude or Berar, by treaties and subsidies, crushed without scruple every state which like that of the Rohillas seemed to afford a nucleus for resistance, and watched with incessant jealousy the growth of powers even as distant as the Sikhs. The American war surprised him in the midst of vast schemes which were to be carried out by later Governors, and hurried him into immediate action. The jealousy of France sought a counterpoise to the power of Britain in that of the Mahrattas, freebooters of Hindoo blood whose tribes had for a century past carried their raids over India from the hills of the western coast, and founded sovereignties in Guzerat, Malwa, and Tanjore. All were bound by a slight tie of subjection to the Mahratta chief who reigned at Poonah, and it was through this chieftain that the French envoys were able to set the whole confederacy in motion against the English presidencies. The danger was met by Hastings with characteristic swiftness of resolve. His difficulties were great. For two years he had been rendered powerless through the opposition of his Council; and when freed from this obstacle the Company pressed him incessantly for money, and the Crown more than once strove to recall him. His own general, Sir Eyre Coote, was miserly, capricious, and had to be humoured like a child. Censures and complaints reached him with every mail. But his calm self-command never failed. No trace of his embarrassments showed itself in his work. The war with the Mahrattas was pressed with a tenacity of purpose which the blunders of subordinates and the inefficiency of the soldiers he was forced to use never shook for a moment. Failure followed failure, and success had hardly been wrung from fortune when a new and overwhelming danger threatened from the south. A military adventurer, Hyder Ali, had built up a compact and vigorous empire out of the wreck of older principalities on the table-land of Mysore. Tyrant as he was, no native rule was so just as Hyder's, no statesmanship so vigorous. He was quickwitted enough to discern the real power of Britain, and only the wretched blundering of the Council of Madras forced him at last to the conclusion that war with the English was less dangerous than friendship with them. Old as he was, his generalship retained all its energy; and a disciplined army, covered by a cloud of horse and backed by a train of artillery, poured down in 1780 on the plain of the Carnatic. The small British force which met him was driven into Madras, and

Digitized by Google

Madras itself was in danger. The news reached Hastings when he was at last on the verge of triumph over the Mahrattas; but his triumph was instantly abandoned, a peace was patched up, and every soldier hurried to Madras. The appearance of Eyre Coote checked the progress of Hyder, and in 1781 the victory of Porto Novo hurled him back into the fastnesses of Mysore. India was the one quarter of the world where Britain lost nothing during the American war; and though the schemes of conquest which Hastings had formed were for the moment frustrated, the annexation of Benares, the extension of British dominions along the Ganges, the reduction of Oude to virtual dependence, the appearance of English armies in Central India, and the defeat of Hyder, laid the foundation of an Indian Empire which his genius was bold enough to foresee.

**End of the War.**

But while England triumphed in the East, the face of the war in America was changed by a terrible disaster. Foiled in an attempt on North Carolina by the refusal of his fellow general, Sir H. Clinton, to assist him, Lord Cornwallis fell back in 1781 on Virginia, and entrenched himself in the lines of York Town. A sudden march of Washington brought him to the front of the English troops at a moment when the French fleet held the sea, and the army of Cornwallis was driven by famine to a surrender as humiliating as that of Saratoga. The news fell like a thunderbolt on the wretched Minister who had till now suppressed at his master's order his own conviction of the uselessness of further bloodshed. Opening his arms and pacing wildly up and down his room, Lord North exclaimed "It is all over," and resigned. England in fact seemed on the brink of ruin. Even Ireland turned on her. A force of Protestant Volunteers which had been raised for the defence of the island, and had rapidly grown to a hundred thousand men, demanded the repeal of Poyning's Act and the recognition of the Irish House of Lords as a final Court of Appeal. The demand was in effect a claim of Irish independence; but there was no means of resisting it, for England was destitute of any force which she could oppose to the Volunteers. The hopes of her enemies rose high. Spain refused peace at any other price than the surrender of Gibraltar. France proposed that England should give up all her Indian conquests save Bengal. But at this moment the victories of Admiral Rodney, the greatest of English seamen save Nelson and Blake, saved the country from a dishonourable peace. He encountered the Spanish fleet off Cape St. Vincent, and only four of its vessels escaped to Cadiz. The triumphs of the French Admiral De Grasse called him to the West Indies, and on the 12th April, 1782, a manœuvre which he was the first to introduce broke his opponent's line and drove the French fleet, shattered, from the sea. The final repulse of the allied armament before Gibraltar in September ended the war. In November the Treaties of Paris and Versailles,

Digitized by Google

SEC. III. THE SECOND PITT. 1783-1789.

while yielding nothing to France and only Minorca and Florida to Spain, acknowledged without reserve the Independence of America.

## Section III.—The Second Pitt. 1783–1789.

[*Authorities.*—Mr. Massey's account of this period may be supplemented by Lord Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," Macknight's "Life of Burke," Lord Russell's "Memoirs of Fox," and the Correspondence of Lord Malmesbury, Lord Auckland, and Mr. Rose. For the Slave Trade, see the Memoirs of Wilberforce by his sons. Burke may be studied in his Life by Macknight, in Mr. Morley's valuable essay on him, and above all in his own works. The state of foreign affairs in 1789 is best seen in Von Sybel's "History of the French Revolution."]

**England and the World.**

The larger and world-wide issues of the establishment of American Independence lie beyond the scope of the present work, nor can we dwell here on the political and social influence which America has exercised ever since on the mother country itself. What startled men most at the time was the discovery that England was not ruined by the loss of her colonies or by the completeness of her defeat. She rose from it indeed stronger and greater than ever. The next ten years saw a display of industrial activity such as the world had never witnessed before. During the twenty which followed she wrestled almost single-handed against the energy of the French Revolution, as well as against the colossal force of Napoleonic tyranny, and came out of the one struggle unconquered and out of the other a conqueror. Never had England stood higher among the nations of the old world than after Waterloo; but she was already conscious that her real greatness lay not in the old world but in the new. From the moment of the Declaration of Independence it mattered little whether England counted for less or more with the nations around her. She was no longer a mere European power, no longer a mere rival of Germany or Russia or France. She was from that hour a mother of nations. In America she had begotten a great people, and her emigrant ships were still to carry on the movement of the Teutonic race from which she herself had sprung. Her work was to be colonization. Her settlers were to dispute Africa with the Kaffir and the Hottentot, to wrest New Zealand from the Maori, to sow on the shores of Australia the seeds of great nations. And to these nations she was to give not only her blood and her speech, but the freedom which she had won. It is the thought of this which flings its grandeur round the pettiest details of our story in the past. The history of France has little result beyond France itself. German or Italian history has no direct issue outside the bounds of Germany or Italy. But England is only a small part of the outcome of English history. Its greater issues lie not within the narrow limits of the mother island, but in the destinies of nations yet to be. The struggles of her patriots, the wisdom of her statesmen,

Digitized by Google

the steady love of liberty and law in her people at large, were shaping in the past of our little island the future of mankind.

**The Rockingham Ministry.**

At the time, however, when this work first became visible in the severance of America, the wisdom of English statesmen seemed at its lowest ebb. The fall of Lord North in March 1782 recalled the Whigs to office; and though the Tories had now grown to a compact body of a hundred and fifty members, the Whigs still remained superior to their rivals in numbers and ability as in distinctness of political aim. The return, too, of the Bedford section of their party, as well as its steady opposition to the American war, had restored much of its early cohesion. But the return of this aristocratic and factious section only widened the breach which was slowly opening, on questions such as that of Parliamentary reform, between the bulk of the Whig party and the small fragment which remained true to the more popular sympathies of Lord Chatham. Lord Shelburne was owned as the head of the Chatham party, and it was reinforced at this moment by the entry into Parliament of the second son of its earliest leader. William Pitt had hardly reached his twenty-second year; but he left college with the learning of a ripe scholar, and his ready and sonorous eloquence had been matured by the teaching of Chatham. "He will be one of the first men in Parliament," said a member to the Whig leader, Charles Fox, after Pitt's first speech in the House of Commons. "He is so already," replied Fox. His figure, tall and spare, but without grace, showed even now in every movement the pride which was written on the hard lines of a countenance never lighted by a smile, a pride which broke out in his cold and repulsive address, his invariable gravity of demeanour, and his habitual air of command. How great the qualities were which lay beneath this haughty exterior no one knew; nor had any one guessed how soon this "boy," as his rivals mockingly styled him, was to crush every opponent and to hold England at his will. There was only a smile of wonder when he refused any of the minor offices which were offered him in the new Whig Administration, which in spite of the King's reluctance was formed on the fall of Lord North under the Marquis of Rockingham.

**Economical Reform.**

On Rockingham fell the duty of putting an end at any cost to the war. Ireland was satisfied by the repeal of the Act of George the First which declared the right of the Parliament of Great Britain to legislate for the Irish people; and negotiations were begun with America and its allies. But more important even than the work of peace was that of putting an end to those abuses in the composition of Parliament by which George the Third had been enabled to plunge the country into war. A thorough reform of the House of Commons was the only effectual means of doing this, and Pitt brought forward a bill founded on his father's plans for that purpose. But the Whigs

Digitized by Google

SEC. III. THE SECOND PITT. 1783-1789.

could not resolve on the sacrifice of property and influence which such a reform would involve. Pitt's bill was thrown out; and in its stead the Ministry endeavoured to weaken the means of corrupt influence which the King had so unscrupulously used by disqualifying persons holding government contracts from sitting in Parliament, by depriving revenue officers of the elective franchise (a measure which diminished the influence of the Crown in seventy boroughs), and above all by a bill for the reduction of the civil establishment, of the pension list, and of the secret service fund, which was introduced by Burke. These measures were to a great extent effectual in diminishing the influence of the Crown over Parliament, and they are memorable as marking the date when the direct bribery of members absolutely ceased. They were absolutely inoperative in rendering the House of Commons really representative of or responsible to the people of England. But the jealousy which the mass of the Whigs entertained for the Chatham section and its plans was more plainly shown on the death of Lord Rockingham in July. Shelburne was no sooner called to the head of the Ministry than Fox with his immediate followers resigned. Pitt on the other hand accepted office as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

**The Coalition.**

The Shelburne Ministry only lasted long enough to conclude the Peace of Paris; for in the opening of 1783 it was overthrown by the most unscrupulous coalition known in our history, that of the Whig followers of Fox with the Tories who still clung to Lord North. Secure in their Parliamentary majority, and heedless of the power of public opinion without the walls of the House of Commons, the new Ministers entered boldly on a greater task than had as yet taxed the constructive genius of English statesmen. To leave such a dominion as Warren Hastings had built up in India to the control of a mere company of traders was clearly impossible; and Fox proposed to transfer the political government from the Directors of the Company to a board of seven Commissioners. The appointment of the seven was vested in the first instance in Parliament, and afterwards in the Crown; their office was to be held for five years, but they were removable on address from either House of Parliament. The proposal was at once met with a storm of opposition. The scheme was an injudicious one; for the new Commissioners would have been destitute of that practical knowledge of India which belonged to the Company, while the want of any immediate link between them and the actual Ministry of the Crown would have prevented Parliament from exercising a real control over their acts. But these objections to the India Bill were hardly heard in the popular outcry against it. The merchant-class was galled by the blow levelled at the greatest merchant-body in the realm: corporations trembled at the cancelling of a charter; the King viewed the measure as a mere means of transferring the patronage of India to the Whigs.

Digitized by Google

With the nation at large the real fault of the bill lay in the character of the Ministry which proposed it. The Whigs had a second time rejected Pitt's proposal of Parliamentary reform; but their coalition with North showed that in an unreformed Parliament the force of public opinion was unable to check the most shameless efforts of political faction. The power of the Crown had been diminished by the reforms of Lord Rockingham to the profit, not of the people, but of the borough-mongers who usurped its representation. To give the rule and patronage of India over to the existing House of Commons was to give a new and immense power to a body which misused in the grossest way the power it possessed. It was the sense of this popular feeling which encouraged the King to exert his personal influence to defeat the measure in the Lords, and on its defeat to order his Ministers to deliver up the seals. In December 1783 Pitt accepted the post of First Lord of the Treasury; but his position would at once have been untenable had the country gone with its nominal representatives. He was defeated again and again by large majorities in the Commons; but the majorities dwindled as a shower of addresses from every quarter, from the Tory University of Oxford as from the Whig Corporation of London, proved that public opinion went with the Minister and not with the House. It was the general sense of this which justified Pitt in the firmness with which, in the teeth of addresses for his removal from office, he delayed the dissolution of Parliament for five months, and gained time for that ripening of opinion on which he counted for success. When the elections of 1784 came the struggle was at once at an end. The public feeling had become strong enough for the moment to break through the corrupt influences which generally made representation a farce. Every great constituency returned supporters to Pitt; of the majority which had defeated him in the Commons a hundred and sixty members were unseated; and only a fragment of the Whig party was saved by its command of nomination boroughs.

**The Trial of Hastings.**

India owes to Pitt's triumph a form of government which remained unchanged to our own day. The India Bill which he introduced in 1784 preserved in appearance the political and commercial powers of the Directors, while establishing a Board of Control, formed from members of the Privy Council, for the approval or annulling of their acts. Practically, however, the powers of the Board of Directors were absorbed by a secret committee of three elected members of that body, to whom all the more important administrative functions had been reserved by the bill, while those of the Board of Control were virtually exercised by its President. As the President was in effect a new Secretary of State for the Indian Department, and became an important member of each Ministry, responsible like his fellow-members for his action to Parliament, the administration of India was thus made a part of the

Digitized by Google

general system of the English Government; while the secret committee supplied the practical experience of Indian affairs in which the Minister might be deficient. But a far more important change than any which could be wrought by legislative measures took place at this time in the attitude of England itself towards its great dependency. The discussions over the rival India Bills created a sense of national responsibility for its good government. There was a general resolve that the security against injustice and misrule which was enjoyed by the poorest Englishman should be enjoyed by the poorest Hindoo; and this resolve expressed itself in 1786 in the trial of Warren Hastings. Hastings returned from India at the close of the war with the hope of rewards as great as those of Clive. He had saved all that Clive had gained. He had laid the foundation of a vast empire in the East. He had shown rare powers of administration, and the foresight, courage, and temperance which mark the real rulers of men. But the wisdom and glory of his rule could not hide its terrible ruthlessness. To glut the ceaseless demands of the Company at home, to support his wars, to feed his diplomacy, he had needed money; and he took it wherever he could find it. He sold for a vast sum the services of British troops to crush the free tribes of the Rohillas. He wrung half a million by oppression from the Rajah of Benares. He extorted by torture and starvation more than a million from the Princesses of Oude. Nor was this all. He had retained his hold upon power by measures hardly less unscrupulous. At the opening of his career, when he was looked upon as helpless before his enemies in the Council, he had shown his power by using the forms of English law to bring Nuncomar, a native who chose the party opposed to him, to death as a forger. When Sir Elijah Impey, the first Chief Justice of Bengal, stood in the way of his plans, he bribed him into acquiescence by creating a fictitious and well-paid office in his favour. It was true that the hands of the Governor-General were clean, and that he had sought for power from no selfish motive, but from a well-grounded conviction that his possession of power was necessary for the preservation of India to the British Crown. But even Pitt shrank from justifying his acts when Burke, in words of passionate eloquence, moved his impeachment. The great trial lingered on for years, and in the long run Hastings secured an acquittal. But the end at which the impeachment aimed had really been won. The crimes which sullied the glory of Hastings have never been repeated by the worst of his successors. From that day to this the peasant of Bengal or of Mysore has enjoyed the same rights of justice and good government as are claimed by Englishmen.

**William Pitt.**

The refusal, in spite of pressure from the King, to shelter Hastings when he had once convinced himself that Hastings was unjust, marked the character of William Pitt. At the moment when the new Parlia-

Digitized by Google

ment came together after the overthrow of the Coalition, the Minister of twenty-five seemed master of England as no Minister had been before. Even the King yielded to his sway, partly through gratitude for the triumph he had won for him over the Whigs, partly from a sense of the madness which was soon to strike him down. The Whigs were broken, unpopular, and without a policy. The Tories clung to the Minister who had "saved the King." All that the trading classes had loved in Chatham, his nobleness of temper, his consciousness of power, his patriotism, his sympathy with a wider world than the world within the Parliament-House, they saw in William Pitt. He had little indeed of the poetic and imaginative side of Chatham's genius, of his quick perception of what was just and what was possible, his far-reaching conceptions of national policy, his outlook into the future of the world. Pitt's flowing and sonorous commonplaces rang hollow beside the broken phrases which still make his father's eloquence a living thing to Englishmen. On the other hand he possessed some qualities in which Chatham was utterly wanting. His temper, though naturally ardent and sensitive, had been schooled in a proud self-command. His simplicity and good taste freed him from his father's ostentation and extravagance. Diffuse and commonplace as his speeches seem, they were adapted as much by their very qualities of diffuseness and commonplace, as by their lucidity and good sense, to the intelligence of the middle classes whom Pitt felt to be his real audience. In his love of peace, his immense industry, his despatch of business, his skill in debate, his knowledge of finance, he recalled Sir Robert Walpole; but he had virtues which Walpole never possessed, and he was free from Walpole's worst defects. He was careless of personal gain. He was too proud to rule by corruption. His lofty self-esteem left no room for any jealousy of subordinates. He was generous in his appreciation of youthful merits; and the "boys" he gathered round him, such as Canning and Lord Wellesley, rewarded his generosity by a devotion which death left untouched. With Walpole's cynical inaction Pitt had no sympathy whatever. His policy from the first was one of active reform, and he faced every one of the problems, financial, constitutional, religious, from which Walpole had shrunk. Above all he had none of Walpole's scorn of his fellow-men. The noblest feature in his mind was its wide humanity. His love for England was as deep and personal as his father's love, but of the sympathy with English passion and English prejudice which had been at once his father's weakness and strength he had not a trace. When Fox taunted him with forgetting Chatham's jealousy of France and his faith that she was the natural foe of England, Pitt answered nobly that "to suppose any nation can be unalterably the enemy of another is weak and childish." The temper of the time and the larger sympathy of man with man, which especially marks the eighteenth century as a turning-point in the history of the human race,

Digitized by Google

Sec. III.
The Second Pitt.
1783–1789.

was everywhere bringing to the front a new order of statesmen, such as Turgot and Joseph the Second, whose characteristics were a love of mankind, and a belief that as the happiness of the individual can only be secured by the general happiness of the community to which he belongs, so the welfare of individual nations can only be secured by the general welfare of the world. Of these Pitt was one. But he rose high above the rest in the consummate knowledge and the practical force which he brought to the realization of his aims.

**English industry.**

Pitt's strength lay in finance; and he came forward at a time when the growth of English wealth made a knowledge of finance essential to a great Minister. The progress of the nation itself was wonderful. Population more than doubled during the eighteenth century, and the advance of wealth was even greater than that of population. The war had added a hundred millions to the national debt, but the burden was hardly felt. The loss of America only increased the commerce with that country. Industry began that great career which was to make England the workshop of the world. During the first half of the century the cotton trade, of which Manchester was the principal seat, had only risen from the value of twenty to that of forty thousand pounds; and the hand-loom retained the primitive shape which is still found in the hand-looms of India. But three successive inventions in ten years, that of the spinning-machine in 1768 by the barber Arkwright, of the spinning-jenny in 1764 by the weaver Hargreaves, of the mule by the weaver Crompton in 1776, turned Lancashire into a hive of industry. At the accession of George the Third the whole linen trade of Scotland was of less value than the cloth trade of Yorkshire. Before the close of his reign Glasgow was fast rising into one of the trading capitals of the world. The potteries which Wedgewood established in 1763, and in which he availed himself of the genius of Flaxman, soon eclipsed those of Holland or France. Before twenty years had passed more than twenty thousand potters were employed in Staffordshire alone. This rapid growth of manufactures brought about a corresponding improvement in the means of communication throughout the country. Up to this time these had been of the rudest sort. The roads were for the most part so wretched that all cheap or rapid transit was impossible; and the cotton bales of Manchester were carried to Liverpool or Bristol on packhorses. One of the great works of this period was the covering England with a vast network of splendid highways. But roads alone could not meet the demands of the new commerce. The engineering genius of Brindley joined Manchester with its port of Liverpool in 1761 by a canal which crossed the Irwell on a lofty aqueduct; and the success of the experiment soon led to the universal introduction of water-carriage. Canals linked the Trent with the Mersey, the Thames with the Trent, the Forth with the Clyde. The cheapness of the new mode of transit

Digitized by Google

as well as the great advance in engineering science brought about a development of English collieries which soon gave coal a great place among our exports. Its value as a means of producing mechanical force was revealed in the discovery by which Watt in 1765 transformed the Steam Engine from a mere toy into the most wonderful instrument which human industry has ever had at its command. The same energy was seen in the agricultural change which passed gradually over the country. Between the first and the last years of the eighteenth century a fourth part of England was reclaimed from waste and brought under tillage. At the Revolution of 1688 more than half the kingdom was believed to consist of moorland and forest and fen; and vast commons and wastes covered the greater part of England north of the Humber. But the numerous enclosure bills which began with the reign of George the Second and especially marked that of his successor changed the whole face of the country. Ten thousand square miles of untilled land have been added under their operation to the area of cultivation; while in the tilled land itself the production had been more than doubled by the advance of agriculture which began with the travels and treatises of Arthur Young, the introduction of the system of large farms by Mr. Coke of Norfolk, and the development of scientific tillage in the valleys of Lothian.

**Adam Smith.**

If books are to be measured by the effect which they have produced on the fortunes of mankind, the "Wealth of Nations" must rank among the greatest of books. Its author was Adam Smith, an Oxford scholar and a professor at Glasgow. Labour, he contended, was the one source of wealth, and it was by freedom of labour, by suffering the worker to pursue his own interest in his own way, that the public wealth would best be promoted. Any attempt to force labour into artificial channels, to shape by laws the course of commerce, to promote special branches of industry in particular countries, or to fix the character of the intercourse between one country and another, is not only a wrong to the worker or the merchant, but actually hurtful to the wealth of a state. The book was published in 1776, in the opening of the American war, and studied by Pitt during his career as an undergratuate at Cambridge. From that time he owned Adam Smith for his master. He had hardly become Minister before he took the principles of the "Wealth of Nations" as the groundwork of his policy. The ten earlier years of his rule marked a new point of departure in English statesmanship. Pitt was the first English Minister who really grasped the part which industry was to play in promoting the welfare of the world. He was not only a peace Minister and a financier, as Walpole had been, but a statesman who saw that the best security for peace lay in the freedom and widening of commercial intercourse between nations; that public economy not only lessened the general burdens but left additional capital in the hands of industry; and that finance



Digitized by Google

SEC. III.
THE SECOND PITT.
1783-1789.
Pitt and Reform.

might be turned from a mere means of raising revenue into a powerful engine of political and social improvement.

That little was done by Pitt himself to carry these principles into effect was partly owing to the mass of ignorance and prejudice with which he had to contend, and still more to the sudden break of his plans through the French Revolution. His power rested above all on the trading classes, and these were still persuaded that wealth meant gold and silver, and that commerce was best furthered by jealous monopolies. It was only by patience and dexterity that the mob of merchants and country squires who backed him in the House of Commons could be brought to acquiesce in the changes he proposed. How small his power was when it struggled with the prejudices around him was seen in the failure of the first great measure he brought forward. The question of parliamentary reform had been mooted, as we have seen, during the American war. Chatham had advocated an increase of county members, who were then the most independent part of the Lower House. The Duke of Richmond talked of universal suffrage, equal electoral districts, and annual Parliaments. Wilkes anticipated the Reform Bill of a later time by proposing to disfranchise the rotten boroughs, and to give members in their stead to the counties and to the more popular and wealthy towns. William Pitt had made the question his own by bringing forward a motion for reform on his first entry into the House, and one of his first measures as Minister was to bring in a bill in 1785 which, while providing for the gradual extinction of all decayed boroughs, disfranchised thirty-six at once, and transferred their members to counties. He brought the King to abstain from opposition, and strove to buy off the borough-mongers, as the holders of rotten boroughs were called, by offering to compensate them for the seats they lost at their market-value. But the bulk of his own party joined the bulk of the Whigs in a steady resistance to the bill. The more glaring abuses, indeed, within Parliament itself, the abuses which stirred Chatham and Wilkes to action, had in great part disappeared. The bribery of members had ceased. Burke's Bill of Economical Reform had dealt a fatal blow at the influence which the King exercised by suppressing a host of useless offices, household appointments, judicial and diplomatic charges, which were maintained for the purpose of corruption. Above all, the recent triumph of public opinion had done much to diminish the sense of any real danger from the opposition which Parliament had shown till now to the voice of the nation. "Terribly disappointed and beat" as Wilberforce tells us Pitt was by the rejection of his measure, the temper of the House and of the people was too plain to be mistaken, and though his opinion remained unaltered, he never brought it forward again.

The failure of his constitutional reform was more than compensated

Digitized by Google

Sec. III. The Second Pitt 1783-1789.

Pitt's Finance.

by the triumphs of his finance. When he entered office public credit was at its lowest ebb. The debt had been doubled by the American war, yet large sums still remained unfunded, while the revenue was reduced by a vast system of smuggling which turned every coast-town into a nest of robbers. The deficiency was met for the moment by new taxes, but the time which was thus gained served to change the whole face of public affairs. The first of Pitt's financial measures—his revival of the plan for gradually paying off the debt by a sinking fund which Walpole had thrown aside—was undoubtedly an error; but it had a happy effect in restoring public confidence. He met the smuggler by a reduction of custom-duties which made his trade unprofitable. He revived Walpole's plan of an Excise. Meanwhile the public expenses were reduced, and commission after commission was appointed to introduce economy into every department of the public service. The rapid development of the national industry which we have already noted no doubt aided the success of these measures. Credit was restored. The smuggling trade was greatly reduced. In two years there was a surplus of a million, and though duty after duty was removed the revenue rose steadily with every remission of taxation. Meanwhile Pitt was showing the political value of the new finance. France was looked upon as England's natural enemy. Ireland, then as now, was England's difficulty. The tyrannous misgovernment under which she had groaned ever since the battle of the Boyne was producing its natural fruit; the miserable land was torn with political faction, religious feuds and peasant conspiracies; and so threatening had the attitude of the Protestant party which ruled it become during the American war that they had forced the English Parliament to relinquish its control over their Parliament in Dublin. Pitt saw that much at least of the misery and disloyalty of Ireland sprang from its poverty. The population had grown rapidly while culture remained stationary and commerce perished. And of this poverty much was the direct result of unjust law. Ireland was a grazing country, but to protect the interest of English graziers the import of its cattle into England was forbidden. To protect the interests of English clothiers and weavers, its manufactures were loaded with duties. To redress this wrong was the first financial effort of Pitt, and the bill which he introduced in 1785 did away with every obstacle to freedom of trade between England and Ireland. It was a measure which, as he held, would "draw what remained of the shattered empire together," and repair in part the loss of America by creating a loyal and prosperous Ireland; and though he struggled almost alone in face of a fierce opposition from the Whigs and the Manchester merchants, he dragged it through the English Parliament, only to see it flung aside by the Protestant faction under Grattan which then ruled the Parliament of Ireland. But the defeat only spurred him to a greater effort else-



Digitized by Google

SEC. III.
THE SECOND PITT.
1783-1789.

where; and his Treaty of Commerce with France in 1787 enabled the subjects of both countries to reside and travel in either without license or passport, did away with all prohibition of trade on either side, and reduced every import duty. But the spirit of humanity which breathed through these measures of commercial freedom soon took a larger scope. The trial of Warren Hastings was rousing England to a more vivid sympathy with the Hindoo; and in the year which followed the adoption of free trade with France the new philanthropy allied itself with the religious spirit created by the Wesleys in an attack on the Slave Trade. At the Peace of Utrecht the privilege of carrying negroes from the coast of Africa to sell them as labourers in the American colonies and the West Indian islands had been counted among the gains which England reaped from the war with Lewis; but the horrors and iniquity of the trade, the ruin and degradation of the native tribes which it brought about, and above all the oppression of the negro himself, were now felt widely and deeply. "After a conversation in the open air at the root of an old tree at Holwood, just above the steep descent into the vale of Keston," Pitt encouraged his friend William Wilberforce, whose position as the Parliamentary representative of the Evangelical party gave weight to his advocacy of such a cause, to bring in a bill for the abolition of the Slave Trade. In spite of Pitt's ardent support, the bill of 1788 fell before the opposition of the Liverpool slave-merchants and the general indifference of the House. But the great movement of which it formed a part was now passing on the other side of the Channel into a revolution which was to change the face of the world.

**State of Europe.**

The Puritan resistance of the seventeenth century had in the end succeeded in checking, so far as England was concerned, the general tendency of the time to religious and political despotism. Since the Revolution of 1688 freedom of conscience and the people's right to govern itself through its representatives in Parliament had been practically established. Social equality had begun long before. Every man from the highest to the lowest was subject to, and protected by, the same law. The English aristocracy, though exercising a powerful influence on government, were possessed of few social privileges, and prevented from forming a separate class in the nation by the legal and social tradition which counted all save the eldest son of a noble house as commoners. No impassable line parted the gentry from the commercial classes, and these again possessed no privileges which could part them from the lower classes of the community. After a short struggle, public opinion, the general sense of educated Englishmen, had established itself as the dominant element in English government. But in all the other great states of Europe the wars of religion had left only the name of freedom. Government tended to a pure despotism. Privilege was supreme in religion, in politics, in society. Society itself rested on a

Digitized by Google

rigid division of classes from one another, which refused to the people at large any equal rights of justice or of industry. We have already seen how alien such a conception of national life was from the ideas which the wide diffusion of intelligence during the eighteenth century was spreading throughout Europe; and in almost every country some enlightened rulers endeavoured by administrative reforms in some sort to satisfy the sense of wrong which was felt around them. The attempts of sovereigns like Frederick the Great in Prussia and Joseph the Second in Austria and the Netherlands were rivalled by the efforts of statesmen such as Turgot in France. It was in France indeed that the contrast between the actual state of society and the new ideas of public right was felt most keenly. Nowhere had the victory of the Crown been more complete. The aristocracy had been robbed of all share in public affairs; it enjoyed social privileges and exemption from any contribution to the public burdens without that sense of public duty which a governing class to some degree always possesses. Guilds and monopolies at once fettered the industry of the trader and the merchant and cut them off from the working classes, as the value attached to noble blood cut both off from the aristocracy.

**State of France.**

If its political position indeed were compared with that of most of the countries round it, France stood high. Its government was less oppressive and more influenced by public opinion, its general wealth was larger and more evenly diffused, there was a better administration of justice, and greater security for public order. Poor as its peasantry seemed to English eyes they were far above the peasants of Germany or Spain. Its middle class was the quickest and most intelligent in Europe. Opinion under Lewis the Fifteenth was practically free, though powerless to influence the government of the country; and a literary class had sprung up which devoted itself with wonderful brilliancy and activity to popularizing the ideas of social and political justice which it learned from English writers, and in the case of Montesquieu and Voltaire from personal contact with English life. The moral conceptions of the time, its love of mankind, its sense of human brotherhood, its hatred of oppression, its pity for the guilty and the poor, its longing after a higher and nobler standard of life and action, were expressed by a crowd of writers, and above all by Rousseau, with a fire and eloquence which carried them to the heart of the people. Everywhere the new force of intelligence jostled roughly with the social forms with which it found itself in contact. The philosopher denounced the tyranny of the priesthood. The peasant grumbled at the lord's right to judge him in his courts and to exact feudal services from him. The merchant was galled by the trading restrictions and the heavy taxation. The country gentry rebelled against their exclusion from public life and from the government of the country. Its powerlessness to bring about any change at home turned all the new

Digitized by Google

SEC. III. THE SECOND PITT. 1783-1789.

energy into sympathy with a struggle against tyranny abroad. Public opinion forced France to ally itself with America in its contest for liberty, and French volunteers under the Marquis de Lafayette joined Washington's army. But while the war spread more widely throughout the nation the craving for freedom, it brought on the Government financial embarrassment from which it could only free itself by an appeal to the country at large. Lewis the Sixteenth resolved to summon the States-General, which had not met since the time of Richelieu, and to appeal to the nobles to waive their immunity from taxation. His resolve at once stirred into vigorous life every impulse and desire which had been seething in the minds of the people; and the States-General no sooner met at Versailles in May 1789 than the fabric of despotism and privilege began to crumble. A rising in Paris destroyed the Bastille, and the capture of this fortress was taken for the sign of a new æra of constitutional freedom for France and for Europe. Everywhere men thrilled with a strange joy at the tidings of its fall. "How much is this the greatest event that ever happened in the world," Fox cried with a burst of enthusiasm; "and how much the best!"

**Pitt and Russia.**

Pitt regarded the approach of France to sentiments of liberty which had long been familiar to England with characteristic coolness, but with no distrust. For the moment, indeed, his attention was distracted by an attack of madness which visited the King in 1788, and by the claim of a right to the Regency which was at once advanced by the Prince of Wales. The Prince belonged to the Whig party; and Fox, who was travelling in Italy, hurried home to support his claim in full belief that the Prince's Regency would be followed by his own return to power. Pitt successfully resisted it on the constitutional ground that in such a case the right to choose a temporary regent, under what limitations it would, lay with Parliament; and a bill which conferred the Regency on the Prince, in accordance with this view, was already passing the Houses when the recovery of the King put an end to the long dispute. Abroad, too, Pitt's difficulties were increasing. Russia had risen into greatness under Catherine the Second; and Catherine had resolved from the first on the annexation of Poland, the expulsion of the Turks from Europe, and the setting up of a Russian throne at Constantinople. In her first aim she was baffled for the moment by Frederick the Great. She had already made herself virtually mistress of the whole of Poland, her armies occupied the kingdom, and she had seated a nominee of her own on its throne, when Frederick in union with the Emperor Joseph the Second forced her to admit Germany to a share of the spoil. If the first Polish partition of 1773 brought the Russian frontier westward to the upper waters of the Dwina and the Dnieper, it gave Galicia to Maria Theresa, and West Prussia to Frederick himself. Foiled in her first

Digitized by Google

aim, she waited for the realization of her second till the alliance between the two German powers was at an end through the resistance of Prussia to Joseph's schemes for the annexation of Bavaria, and the death of Frederick removed her most watchful foe. Then in 1788 Joseph and the Empress joined hands for a partition of the Turkish Empire. But Prussia was still watchful, and England was no longer fettered as in 1773 by troubles with America. The friendship established by Chatham between the two countries, which had been suspended by Bute's treachery and all but destroyed during the Northern League of Neutral Powers, had been restored by Pitt through his co-operation with Frederick's successor in the restoration of the Dutch Statholderate. Its political weight was now seen in the alliance of England, Prussia, and Holland in 1789 for the preservation of the Turkish Empire. A great European struggle seemed at hand; and in such a struggle the sympathy and aid of France was of the highest importance. But with the treaty the danger passed away. In the spring of 1790 Joseph died broken-hearted at the failure of his plans and the revolt of the Netherlands against his innovations; and Austria practically withdrew from the war with the Turks.

**Burke.**

Meanwhile in France things moved fast. By breaking down the division between its separate orders the States-General became a National Assembly, and abolished the privileges of the provincial parliaments, of the nobles, and the Church. In October the mob of Paris marched on Versailles and forced both King and Assembly to return with them to the capital; and a Constitution, hastily put together, was accepted by Lewis the Sixteenth in the stead of his old despotic power. To Pitt, the tumult and disorder with which these great changes were wrought seemed transient matters. In January 1790 he still believed that "the present convulsions in France must sooner or later culminate in general harmony and regular order," and that when her own freedom was established, "France would stand forth as one of the most brilliant powers of Europe." But the coolnesss and good-will with which Pitt looked on the Revolution was far from being universal in the nation at large. The cautious good sense of the bulk of Englishmen, their love of order and law, their distaste for violent changes and for abstract theories, as well as their reverence for the past, were fast rousing throughout the country a dislike of the revolutionary changes which were hurrying on across the Channel. That the dislike passed slowly into fear and hatred was due above all to the impassioned efforts of Edmund Burke. Forty years before, Burke had come to London as a poor and unknown Irish adventurer. The learning which made him at once the friend of Johnson and Reynolds, and the imaginative power which enabled him to give his learning a living shape, promised him a philosophical and literary career: but instinct drew Burke to politics; he became secre-

Digitized by Google

SEC III. THE SECOND PITT. 1783-1789.

tary to Lord Rockingham, and in 1765 entered Parliament under his patronage. His speeches on the Stamp Acts and the American War soon lifted him into fame. The heavy Quaker-like figure, the little wig, the round spectacles, the cumbrous roll of paper which loaded Burke's pocket, gave little promise of a great orator and less of the characteristics of his oratory,—its passionate ardour, its poetic fancy, its amazing prodigality of resources; the dazzling succession in which irony, pathos, invective, tenderness, the most brilliant word-pictures, the coolest argument followed each other. It was an eloquence indeed of a wholly new order in English experience. Walpole's clearness of statement, Chatham's appeals to emotion, were exchanged for the impassioned expression of a distinct philosophy of politics. "I have learned more from him than from all the books I ever read," Fox exclaimed with a burst of generous admiration. The philosophical cast of Burke's reasoning was unaccompanied by any philosophical coldness of tone or phrase. The groundwork indeed of his nature was poetic. His ideas, if conceived by the reason, took shape and colour from the splendour and fire of his imagination. A nation was to him a great living society, so complex in its relations, and whose institutions were so interwoven with glorious events in the past, that to touch it rudely was a sacrilege. Its constitution was no artificial scheme of government, but an exquisite balance of social forces which was in itself a natural outcome of its history and development. In the Revolution of 1688 Burke saw the fated close of a great æra of national progress which had moved on "from precedent to precedent." His temper was in this way conservative, but his conservatism sprang not from a love of inaction but from a sense of the value of social order, and from an imaginative reverence for all that existed. Every institution was hallowed to him by the clear insight with which he discerned its relations to the past and its subtle connexion with the social fabric around it. To touch even an anomaly seemed to Burke to be risking the ruin of a complex structure of national order which it had cost centuries to build up. "The equilibrium of the Constitution," he said, "has something so delicate about it, that the least displacement may destroy it." "It is a difficult and dangerous matter even to touch so complicated a machine." Perhaps the readiest refutation of such a theory was to be found in its influence on Burke's practical dealing with politics. It left him hostile to all movement whatever. He gave his passionate adhesion to the helpless inaction of the Whigs. He made an idol of Lord Rockingham, an honest man, but the weakest of party leaders. He strove to check the corruption of Parliament by his bill for civil retrenchment, but he took the lead in defeating all plans for its reform. Though he was the one man in England who understood with Pitt the value of free industry, he struggled bitterly against the young Minister's proposals to give freedom to Irish trade, and against his Commercial Treaty

Digitized by Google

with France. His work seemed to be that of investing with a gorgeous poetry the policy of timid content which the Whigs had inherited from Sir Robert Walpole. The very intensity of his belief in the natural development of a nation seemed to render him incapable of understanding that any good could come from particular laws or special reforms.

Nootka Sound.

It was easy to see in what way a temper such as this would be stirred by the changes which were now going on in France. The fall of the Bastille, which kindled enthusiasm in Fox, filled Burke with distrust. "Whenever a separation is made between liberty and justice," he wrote a few weeks later, "neither is safe." The night of the fourth of August, when the privileges of every class were abolished, filled him with horror. He saw, and rightly saw, in it the critical moment which revealed the character of the Revolution, and his part was taken at once. "The French," he cried in January, while Pitt was foretelling a glorious future for the new Constitution, "the French have shown themselves the ablest architects of ruin who have hitherto existed in the world. In a short space of time they have pulled to the ground their army, their navy, their commerce, their arts and their manufactures." But in Parliament he stood alone. The Whigs, though distrustfully, followed Fox in his applause of the Revolution. The Tories, yet more distrustfully, followed Pitt; and Pitt warmly expressed his sympathy with the constitutional government which was ruling France. At this moment indeed the revolutionary party gave a signal proof of its friendship for England. Irritated by an English settlement at Nootka Sound in California, Spain appealed to France for aid in accordance with the Family Compact; and the French Ministry with the constitutional party at its back resolved on a war as the best means of checking the progress of the Revolution and restoring the power of the Crown. The revolutionary party naturally opposed this design; after a bitter struggle the right of declaring war, save with the sanction of the Assembly, was taken from the King; and all danger of hostilities passed away. "The French Government," Pitt asserted "was bent on cultivating the most unbounded friendship for Great Britain," and he saw no reason in its revolutionary changes why Britain should not return the friendship of France. He saw that nothing but the joint action of France and England would in the end arrest the troubles of Eastern Europe. His intervention foiled for the moment a fresh effort of Prussia to rob Poland of Dantzic and Thorn. But though Russia was still pressing Turkey hard, a Russian war was so unpopular in England that a hostile vote in Parliament forced Pitt to discontinue his armaments; and a fresh union of Austria and Prussia, which promised at this juncture to bring about a close of the Turkish struggle, promised also a fresh attack on the independence of Poland.

Digitized by Google

SEC. III. THE SECOND PITT. 1783-1789.

**Burke and the Revolution.**

But while Pitt was pleading for friendship between the two countries, Burke was resolved to make friendship impossible. In Parliament, as we have seen, he stood alone. He had long ceased, in fact, to have any hold over the House of Commons. The eloquence which had vied with that of Chatham during the discussions on the Stamp Act had become distasteful to the bulk of its members. The length of his speeches, the profound and philosophical character of his argument, the splendour and often the extravagance of his illustrations, his passionate earnestness, his want of temper and discretion, wearied and perplexed the squires and merchants about him. He was known at last as "the dinner-bell of the House," so rapidly did its benches thin at his rising. For a time his energies found scope in the impeachment of Hastings; and the grandeur of his appeals to the justice of England hushed detraction. But with the close of the impeachment his repute had again fallen; and the approach of old age, for he was now past sixty, seemed to counsel retirement from an assembly where he stood unpopular and alone. But age and disappointment and loneliness were all forgotten as Burke saw rising across the Channel the embodiment of all that he hated—a Revolution founded on scorn of the past, and threatening with ruin the whole social fabric which the past had reared; the ordered structure of classes and ranks crumbling before a doctrine of social equality; a state rudely demolished and reconstituted; a Church and a nobility swept away in a night. Against the enthusiasm of what he rightly saw to be a new political religion he resolved to rouse the enthusiasm of the old. He was at once a great orator and a great writer; and now that the House was deaf to his voice, he appealed to the country by his pen. The "Reflections on the French Revolution" which he published in October 1790, not only denounced the acts of rashness and violence which sullied the great change that France had wrought, but the very principles from which the change had sprung. Burke's deep sense of the grandeur of social order, of the value of that continuity in human affairs "without which men would become like flies in a summer," blinded him to all but the faith in mere rebellion and the yet sillier faith in mere novelty which disguised a real nobleness of aim and temper even in the most ardent of the revolutionists. He would see no abuses in the past, now that it had fallen, or anything but the ruin of society in the future. He preached a crusade against men whom he regarded as the foes of religion and civilization, and called on the armies of Europe to put down a Revolution whose principles threatened every state with destruction.

**Pitt and the Revolution.**

The great obstacle to such a crusade was Pitt: and one of the grandest outbursts of the "Reflections" closed with a bitter taunt at the Minister. "The age of chivalry," Burke cried, "is gone; that of sophisters, economists, and calculators has succeeded, and the glory of

Digitized by Google

Europe is extinguished for ever." But neither taunts nor invective moved Pitt from his course. At the moment when the "Reflections" appeared he gave a fresh assurance to France of his resolve to have nothing to do with any crusade against the Revolution. "This country," he wrote, "means to persevere in the neutrality hitherto scrupulously observed with respect to the internal dissensions of France; and from which it will never depart unless the conduct held there makes it indispensable as an act of self-defence." So far indeed was he from sharing the reactionary panic which was spreading around him that he chose this time for supporting Fox in his Libel Act, a measure which, by transferring the decision on what was libellous in any publication from the judge to the jury, completed the freedom of the press; and himself passed in 1791 a Bill which, though little noticed among the storms of the time, was one of the noblest of his achievements. He boldly put aside the dread which had been roused by the American war, that the gift of self-government to our colonies would serve only as a step towards their secession from the mother country, and established a House of Assembly and a Council in the two Canadas. "I am convinced," said Fox, who gave the measure his hearty support, "that the only method of retaining distant colonies with advantage is to enable them to govern themselves;" and the policy of the one statesman as well as the foresight of the other have been justified by the later history of our dependencies. Nor had Burke better success with his own party. Fox remained an ardent lover of the Revolution, and answered a fresh attack of Burke upon it with more than usual warmth. A close affection had bound till now the two men together; but the fanaticism of Burke declared it at an end. "There is no loss of friendship," Fox exclaimed, with a sudden burst of tears. "There is!" Burke repeated. "I know the price of my conduct. Our friendship is at an end." Within the walls of Parliament, Burke stood utterly alone. His "Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs," in June 1791, failed to detach a follower from Fox. Pitt coldly counselled him rather to praise the English Constitution than to rail at the French. "I have made many enemies and few friends," Burke wrote sadly to the French princes who had fled from their country and were gathering in arms at Coblentz, "by the part I have taken." But the opinion of the people was slowly drifting to his side. A sale of thirty thousand copies showed that the "Reflections" echoed the general sentiment of Englishmen. The mood of England indeed at this moment was unfavourable to any fair appreciation of the Revolution across the Channel. Her temper was above all industrial. Men who were working hard and fast growing rich, who had the narrow and practical turn of men of business, looked angrily at its sudden disturbance of order, its restless and vague activity, its rhetorical appeals to human feeling, its abstract and often empty theories. In England it

Digitized by Google

SEC. III. THE SECOND PITT. 1783-1789.

was a time of political content and social well-being, of steady economic progress, and of a powerful religious revival; and the insular want of imaginative interest in other races hindered men from seeing that every element of this content, of this order, of this peaceful and harmonious progress, of this reconciliation of society and religion, was wanting abroad. The general sympathy which the Revolution had at first attracted passed slowly into disgust at the violence of its legislative changes, the anarchy of the country, the bankruptcy of its treasury, and the growing power of the mob of Paris. Sympathy in fact was soon limited to a few groups of reformers who gathered in "Constitutional Clubs," and whose reckless language only furthered the national reaction. But in spite of Burke's appeals and the cries of the nobles who had fled from France and longed only to march against their country, Europe held back from war, and Pitt preserved his attitude of neutrality, though with a greater appearance of reserve.

**Conference of Pillnitz.**

So anxious, in fact, did the aspect of affairs in the East make Pitt for the restoration of tranquillity in France, that he foiled a plan which its emigrant nobles had formed for a descent on the French coast, and declared formally at Vienna that England would remain absolutely neutral should hostilities arise between France and the Emperor. But the Emperor was as anxious to avoid a French war as Pitt himself. Though Catherine, now her war with Turkey was over, wished to plunge the two German powers into a struggle with the Revolution which would leave her free to annex Poland single-handed, neither Leopold nor Prussia would tie their hands by such a contest. The flight of Lewis the Sixteenth from Paris in June 1791 brought Europe for a moment to the verge of war; but he was intercepted and brought back; and for a while the danger seemed to incline the revolutionists in France to greater moderation. Lewis too not only accepted the Constitution, but pleaded earnestly with the Emperor against any armed intervention as certain to bring ruin to his throne. In their conference at Pillnitz therefore, in August, Leopold and the King of Prussia contented themselves with a vague declaration inviting the European powers to co-operate in restoring a sound form of government in France, availed themselves of England's neutrality to refuse all military aid to the French princes, and dealt simply with the affairs of Poland. But the peace they desired soon became impossible. The Constitutional Royalists in France availed themselves of the irritation caused by the Declaration of Pillnitz to rouse again the cry for a war which, as they hoped, would give strength to the throne. The Jacobins, on the other hand, under the influence of the "Girondists," or deputies from the south of France, whose aim was a republic, and who saw in a great national struggle a means of overthrowing the monarchy, decided in spite of the opposition of Robespierre on a contest with the Emperor. Both parties united to demand the breaking up of an

Digitized by Google

army which the emigrant princes had formed on the Rhine; and though Leopold assented to this demand, France declared war against his successor, Francis, in April 1792.

**Pitt's Struggle for Peace.**

Misled by their belief in a revolutionary enthusiasm in England, the French Constitutionalists had hoped for her alliance in this war; but though Pitt at once refused aid and stipulated that Holland must remain untouched, he promised neutrality even though Belgium should for a time be occupied by a French army. In the same temper he announced in 1792 a reduction of military forces, and brought forward a Peace Budget which rested on a large remission of taxation. But peace grew hourly more impossible. The French revolutionists, in their eagerness to find an ally in their war, were striving by intrigues with the Constitutional Clubs to rouse the spirit in England which they had roused in France. The French ambassador, Chauvelin, boldly protested against a proclamation which denounced this seditious correspondence. Even Fox, at such a moment, declared that the discussion of Parliamentary reform was inexpedient. Meanwhile Burke was working hard, in writings whose extravagance of style was forgotten in their intensity of feeling, to spread alarm throughout Europe. He had from the first encouraged the emigrant princes to take arms, and sent his son to join them at Coblentz. "Be alarmists," he wrote to them; "diffuse terror!" But the royalist terror which he sowed had at last roused a revolutionary terror in France itself. At the threat of war against the Emperor the two German Courts had drawn together, and reluctantly abandoning all hope of peace with France, gathered eighty thousand men under the Duke of Brunswick, and advanced slowly in August on the Meuse. France, though she had forced on the struggle, was really almost defenceless; her army in Belgium broke at the first shock of arms into shameful rout; and the panic, spreading from the army to the nation at large, took violent and horrible forms. At the first news of Brunswick's advance the mob of Paris broke into the Tuileries on the 10th of August; and on its demand Lewis, who had taken refuge in the Assembly, was suspended from his office and imprisoned in the Temple. From this moment the Revolution, if by the Revolution we mean the progress of France towards political, social, and religious freedom, was at an end. The populace of Paris, with the Commune of Paris at its head, imposed its will upon the Assembly and upon the nation. The only changes which France was for a long time to experience were changes of masters; but whether the Commune or the Directory or Buonaparte were its despot, the government was a simple despotism. And despotism, as ever, began its work with bloodshed and terror. While General Dumouriez by boldness and adroit negotiations arrested the progress of the allies in the defiles of the Argonne, bodies of paid murderers butchered in September the royalist prisoners who crowded

Digitized by Google

the gaols of Paris, with a view of influencing the elections to a new Convention which met to proclaim the abolition of royalty. The retreat of Brunswick's army, whose numbers had been reduced by disease till an advance on Paris became impossible, and a brilliant victory won by Dumouriez at Jemappes which laid the Netherlands at his feet, turned the panic of the French into a wild self-confidence. In November the Convention decreed that France offered the aid of her soldiers to all nations who would strive for freedom. "All Governments are our enemies," said its President; "all peoples are our allies." In the teeth of treaties signed only two years before, and without any pretext for war, the French Government resolved to attack Holland, and ordered its generals to enforce by arms the opening of the Scheldt.

**France declares War on England.**

To do this was to force England into war. Public opinion was pressing harder day by day upon Pitt. The horror of the massacres of September, the hideous despotism of the Parisian mob, had done more to estrange England from the Revolution than all the eloquence of Burke. But even while withdrawing our Minister from Paris on the imprisonment of the King, Pitt clung stubbornly to the hope of peace. He had hindered Holland from joining the coalition against France. His hope was to bring the war to an end through English mediation, and to "leave France, which I believe is the best way, to arrange its own internal affairs as it can." No hour of Pitt's life is so great as the hour when he stood alone in England, and refused to bow to the growing cry of the nation for war. Even the news of the September massacres could only force from him a hope that France might abstain from any war of conquest and escape from its social anarchy. In October the French agent in England reported that Pitt was about to recognize the Republic. At the opening of November he still pressed on Holland a steady neutrality. It was France, and not England, which at last wrenched from his grasp the peace to which he clung so desperately. The decree of the Convention and the attack on the Dutch left him no choice but war, for it was impossible for England to endure a French fleet at Antwerp, or to desert allies like the United Provinces. But even in December the news of the approaching partition of Poland nerved him to a last struggle for peace; he offered to aid Austria in acquiring Bavaria if she would make terms with France, and pledged himself to France to abstain from war if that power would cease from violating the independence of her neighbour states. But across the Channel his moderation was only taken for fear, while in England the general mourning which followed on the news of the French King's execution showed the growing ardour for the inevitable contest. Both sides now ceased from diplomatic communications, and in February 1793 France issued her Declaration of War.

Digitized by Google

## Section IV.—The War with France. 1793–1815.

[*Authorities.*—To those mentioned before we may add Moore's Life of Sheridan; the Lives of Lord Castlereagh, Lord Eldon, and Lord Sidmouth; Romilly's Memoirs; Lord Cornwallis's Correspondence; Mr. Yonge's Life of Lord Liverpool; the Diaries and Correspondence of Lord Malmesbury, Lord Colchester, and Lord Auckland. For the general history of England at this time, see Alison's "History of Europe;" for its military history, Sir William Napier's "History of the Peninsular War."]

**France and the Coalition.**

From the moment when France declared war against England Pitt's power was at an end. His pride, his immovable firmness, and the general confidence of the nation still kept him at the head of affairs; but from this moment he drifted along with a tide of popular feeling which he never fully understood. The very excellences of his character unfitted him for the conduct of a war. He was in fact a Peace Minister, forced into war by a panic and enthusiasm which he shared in a very small degree, and unaided by his father's gift of at once entering into the sympathies and passions around him, or of rousing passions and sympathies in return. Politically indeed his task at home became an easy one, for the nation was united by its longing to fight. Even the bulk of the Whigs, with the Duke of Portland, Lords Fitzwilliam and Spenser, and Mr. Wyndham at their head, deserted Fox when he remained firm in his love of France and of the Revolution, and gave their support to the ministry. Abroad all seemed at first to go ill for France. She was girt in by a ring of enemies: the Emperor, Prussia, Saxony, Sardinia, and Spain were leagued in arms against her, and their efforts were seconded by civil war. The peasants of Poitou and Brittany rose in revolt against the Revolutionary government. Marseilles and Lyons were driven into insurrection by the Jacobins, as the more violent leaders who had now seized the supreme power were called, and a great naval port, that of Toulon, not only hoisted the royalist flag, but admitted an English garrison within its walls. The French armies had already been driven back from Belgium and across the Rhine, when ten thousand English soldiers, under the Duke of York, joined the Austrians in Flanders in 1793. But the chance of crushing the Revolution was lost by the greed and incapacity of the allied powers. Russia, as Pitt had foreseen, was now free to carry out her schemes in the East; and Austria and Prussia turned from the vigorous prosecution of the French war to the final partition of Poland. The allies frittered away in sieges the force which was ready for an advance into the heart of France until the revolt of the West and South was alike drowned in blood. Whatever were the crimes and violence of the Jacobin leaders at this critical moment, France felt in spite of them the value of the Revolution, and rallied enthusias-

Digitized by Google

Sec. IV.
The War with France.
1793-1815.

tically to its support. In 1794 the English were driven from Toulon by a young artillery officer from Corsica, whose name was to become famous, Napoleon Buonaparte; while a victory at Fleurus again made the French masters of the Netherlands. At this moment, too, the overthrow and death of their leader, Maximilian Robespierre, brought about the downfall of the Jacobins, and a more moderate government which succeeded, the government of the Directory, united the whole people in the defence of the country. Victory everywhere followed on the gigantic efforts with which France met the coalition against it. Spain was forced to sue for peace, the Sardinians were driven over the Alps, the provinces along the Rhine were wrested from the Austrians, and the starving and unshod soldiers of the Republic threw back the English army from the Waal and the Meuse and entered Amsterdam in triumph.

**The English Terror.**

The victories of France broke up the confederacy which had threatened it with destruction. Spain, Sweden, and Prussia hastened to make peace with the French Republic. Pitt himself became earnest for peace. He was indeed without means of efficiently carrying on the war. The English army was small and without military experience, while its leaders were utterly incapable. "We have no General," wrote Lord Grenville, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, "but some old woman in a red riband." Nor was weakness and defeat Pitt's only ground for desiring the close of the war. Inflexible and impassive as he seemed, he felt bitterly that the contest was undoing all that he had done. The growth of the public burdens was terrible. If England was without soldiers, she had wealth, and Pitt was forced to turn her wealth into an engine of war. He became the paymaster of the Coalition, and his subsidies brought the allied armies into the field. Immense loans were raised for this purpose and for a war expenditure at home which was as useless as it was extravagant. The public debt rose by leaps and bounds. Taxation, which had reached its lowest point under Pitt's peace administration, mounted to a height undreamed of before. The public suffering was increased by a general panic. Burke had been only too successful in his resolve to "diffuse the terror." The partisans of France and of republicanism in England were in reality but a few handfuls of men, who played at gathering conventions and at calling themselves citizens and patriots in childish imitation of what was going on across the Channel. But the dread of Revolution soon passed beyond the bounds of reason. Even Pitt, though still utterly untouched by the political reaction around him, was shaken by the dream of social danger, and believed in the existence of "thousands of bandits," who were ready to rise against the throne, to murder every landlord, and to sack London. "Paine is no fool," he said to his niece, who quoted to him the "Rights of Man," in which that author had vindicated the principles of the Revolution; "he is perhaps right; but if I did what

Digitized by Google

he wants, I should have thousands of bandits on my hands to-morrow, and London burnt." He shared the belief in a social danger with Parliament and with the nation at large. The Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, a bill against seditious assemblies restricted the liberty of public meeting, and a wider scope was given to the Statute of Treasons. Prosecution after prosecution was directed against the Press; the sermons of some dissenting ministers were indicted as seditious; and the conventions of sympathizers with France were roughly broken up. The worst excesses of the panic were witnessed in Scotland, where young Whigs, whose only offence was an advocacy of Parliamentary reform, were sentenced to transportation, and where a brutal judge openly expressed his regret that the practice of torture in seditious cases should have fallen into disuse. In England, however, the social panic soon passed away as suddenly as it had come. In 1794 three leaders of the Corresponding Society, a body which professed sympathy with France, Hardy, Thelwall, and Horne Tooke, were brought to trial on a charge of high treason, but their acquittal proved that the terror was over. Save for occasional riots, to which the poor were goaded by sheer want of bread, no social disturbance appeared in England through the twenty years of the war.

**Progress of the War.**

But though failure abroad and panic and suffering at home made Pitt earnest to close the struggle with the Revolution, he stood almost alone in his longings for peace. The nation at large was still ardent for war, and its ardour was fired by Burke in his "Letters on a Regicide Peace," which denounced Pitt's attempt in 1796 to negotiate with France. Nor was France less ardent for war than England. Her victories had roused hopes of wider conquests, and though General Moreau was foiled in a march on Vienna, the wonderful successes of Napoleon Buonaparte, who now took the command of the army of the Alps, laid Piedmont at her feet. The year 1797 saw Lombardy conquered in a single campaign; and while Spain allied herself with France, and Prussia concluded a treaty of amity, Austria was forced to purchase peace in the treaty of Campo Formio by the cession of the Netherlands and Milanese to the French Republic. England was left without a single ally. Her credit had sunk to the lowest ebb, and the alarm of a French invasion brought about a suspension of cash payments on the part of the Bank, while a mutiny of the fleet which continued for three months was ended by humiliating concessions. It was in this darkest hour of the struggle that Burke passed away, protesting to the last against the peace which, in spite of his previous failure, Pitt tried in 1797 to negotiate at Lille. But the Minister's efforts were again foiled by the unquenched hatred of the two nations. A French threat of invasion put an end to the depression and disunion which had grown up in England. Credit revived, and in spite of the enormous taxation a public subscription poured two millions



Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.

THE WAR WITH FRANCE. 1793-1815.

into the Treasury towards the expenses of the war. Great military and naval triumphs restored the confidence of the nation. In rejecting Pitt's offers of peace the Directory had counted on a rising which was looked for in Ireland, and on a war in India where Tippoo Sahib, the successor of Hyder Ali in Mysore, had vowed to drive the English from the south. But in 1798 the Irish rising was crushed in a defeat of the insurgents at Vinegar Hill; and Tippoo's death in the storm of his own capital, Seringapatam, only saved him from witnessing the English conquest of Mysore. A yet greater success awaited the British flag at sea. Throughout the war England had maintained her naval supremacy, and the triumphs of her seamen were in strange contrast with her weakness on land. At the outset of the contest the French fleet was defeated and crippled by Lord Howe in a victory which bore the name of the day on which it was won, June 21st, 1794. When Spain joined the French, her fleet was attacked in 1796 by Admiral Jervis off Cape St. Vincent, and driven with terrible loss back to Cadiz. When Holland was conquered by France, her navy was used by the conquerors to attack the English in the Channel with a view to a descent on Ireland. But the Dutch fleet from the Texel was met by a fleet under Admiral Duncan, and almost annihilated in a battle off Camperdown in 1797, an obstinate struggle which showed the Hollanders still worthy of their old renown. The next year saw the crowning victory of the Nile. After his successes in Italy Napoleon Buonaparte had conceived the design of a conquest of Egypt and Syria, a march upon Constantinople, and the subjection of the Turkish Empire. Only the first step in this vast project was fated to be realized. He landed in Egypt, and by a defeat of the Mamelukes soon reduced that country to submission. But the thirteen men-of-war which had escorted his expedition were found by Admiral Nelson in Aboukir Bay, moored close to the shore in a line guarded at either end by gun-boats and batteries. Nelson resolved to thrust his own ships between the French and the shore; his flagship led the way; and after a terrible fight of twelve hours, nine of the French vessels were captured and destroyed, two were burnt, and five thousand French seamen were killed or made prisoners.

**England alone in the War.**

The battle of the Nile and the failure of Buonaparte in an invasion of Syria aided Pitt to revive the coalition of the continental powers against France. A union of the Russian and Austrian armies drove the French back again across the Alps and the Rhine. Italy and the Rhineland were lost, and only the tenacity of General Massena held Switzerland for the Republic. The part which England took in this struggle was an invasion of Holland by a force under the Duke of York, which ended in miserable failure; but an English captain, Sir Sidney Smith, foiled Buonaparte's projects on Syria by his defence

Digitized by Google

of Acre, and the French General, despairing of further success, abandoned his army, which surrendered at a later time to a British expedition, and returned to Europe. The confidence of Pitt in the success of the Coalition for the first time blinded him to the opening for peace that offered itself in the new position of French affairs which was brought about by Buonaparte's return, by his overthrow of the Directory, and his elevation to the office of First Consul of the Republic. His offers of peace were no doubt intended simply to dissolve the Coalition, and gain breathing time for a new organization of France and a new attack on Europe; but their rejection by England was intemperate and unwise. The military genius of the First Consul, however, soon reversed the hopes of the Allies. In 1800 he crossed the St. Bernard, and by his victory at Marengo forced Austria to conclude a peace at Luneville which fixed the frontiers of France at the Rhine, and established a Cisalpine Republic, entirely dependent on her, in Lombardy. At the same time the surrender to England of the island of Malta, which had been taken from the Knights of St. John by a French fleet, and had ever since been blockaded by English ships, stirred the resentment of the Czar Peter, who looked on himself as the patron of the Knights; and at his instigation Sweden and Denmark joined Russia in a league of armed neutrality, and protested against the right of search by which England prevented the importation to France in neutral vessels of materials which might be used in war.

Ireland under the Georges.

But it was at this moment, when England stood once more alone, that Pitt won the greatest of his political triumphs in the union of Ireland with England. The history of Ireland, from its conquest by William the Third up to this time, is one which no Englishman can recall without shame. Since the surrender of Limerick every Catholic Irishman, and there were five Catholics to every Protestant, had been treated as a stranger and a foreigner in his own country. The House of Lords, the House of Commons, the right of voting for representatives in Parliament, the magistracy, all corporate offices in towns, all ranks in the army, the bench, the bar, the whole administration of government or justice, were closed against Catholics. Few Catholic landowners had been left by the sweeping confiscations which had followed the successive revolts of the island, and oppressive laws forced even these few with scant exceptions to profess Protestantism. Necessity, indeed, had brought about a practical toleration of their religion and their worship; but in all social and political matters the native Catholics, in other words the immense majority of the people of Ireland, were simply hewers of wood and drawers of water to their Protestant masters, who still looked on themselves as mere settlers, who boasted of their Scotch or English extraction, and who regarded the name of "Irishman" as an insult. But small as was this Protestant body, one half of it fared little better, as far as power was



Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.
THE WAR WITH FRANCE.
1793-1815.

concerned, than the Catholics; for the Presbyterians, who formed the bulk of the Ulster settlers, were shut out by law from all civil, military, and municipal offices. The administration and justice of the country were thus kept rigidly in the hands of members of the Established Church, a body which comprised about a twelfth of the population of the island; while its government was practically monopolised by a few great Protestant landowners. The rotten boroughs, which had originally been created to make the Irish Parliament dependent on the Crown, had by this time fallen under the influence of the adjacent landlords; whose command of these made them masters of the House of Commons, while they formed in person the House of Peers. To such a length had this system been carried that at the time of the Union more than sixty seats were in the hands of three families alone, —that of Lord Downshire, of the Ponsonbys, and of the Beresfords. One half of the House of Commons, in fact, was returned by a small group of nobles, who were recognized as "parliamentary undertakers," and who undertook to "manage" Parliament on their own terms. Irish politics were for these men a mere means of public plunder; they were glutted with pensions, preferments, and bribes in hard cash in return for their services; they were the advisers of every Lord-Lieutenant, and the practical governors of the country. The result was what might have been expected; and for more than a century Ireland was the worst governed country in Europe. That its government was not even worse than it was, was due to its connection with England and the subordination of its Parliament to the English Privy Council. The Irish Parliament had no power of originating legislative or financial measures, and could only say "yes" or "no" to Acts submitted to it by the Privy Council in England. The English Parliament, too, claimed the right of binding Ireland as well as England by its enactments, and one of its statutes transferred the appellate jurisdiction of the Irish Peerage to the English House of Lords. Galling as these restrictions were to the plundering aristocracy of Ireland, they formed a useful check on its tyranny. But as if to compensate for the benefits of this protection, England did her best to annihilate Irish commerce and to ruin Irish agriculture. Statutes passed by the jealousy of English landowners forbad the export of Irish cattle or sheep to English ports. The export of wool was forbidden, lest it might interfere with the profits of English wool-growers. Poverty was thus added to the curse of misgovernment, and poverty deepened with the rapid growth of the native population, till famine turned the country into a hell.

**Pitt and Ireland.**

The bitter lesson of the last conquest, however, long sufficed to check all dreams of revolt among the natives, and the murders and riots which sprang from time to time out of the general misery and discontent were roughly repressed by the ruling class. When revolt

Digitized by Google

threatened at last, the threat came from the ruling class itself. Some timid efforts made by the English Government at the accession of George the Third to control its tyranny were answered by a refusal of money bills, and by a cry for the removal of the checks imposed on the independence of the Irish Parliament. But it was not till the American war that this cry became a political danger. The threat of a French invasion and the want of any regular force to oppose it compelled the Government to call on Ireland to provide for its own defence, and forty thousand volunteers appeared in arms in 1779. The force was wholly a Protestant one, commanded by Protestant officers, and it was turned to account by the Protestant aristocracy. Threats of an armed revolt backed the eloquence of two Parliamentary leaders, Grattan and Flood, in their demand of "Irish independence;" and the Volunteers bid for the sympathy of the native Catholics, who looked with indifference on these quarrels of their masters, by claiming for them a relaxation of the penal laws against the exercise of their religion and of some of their most oppressive disabilities. So real was the danger that England was forced to give way; and Lord Rockingham induced the British Parliament to abandon in 1782 the judicial and legislative supremacy it had till then asserted over that of Ireland. From this moment England and Ireland were simply held together by the fact that the sovereign of the one island was also the sovereign of the other. During the next eighteen years Ireland was "independent;" but its independence was a mere name for the uncontrolled rule of a few noble families. The victory of the Volunteers had been won simply to the profit of the "undertakers," who returned the majority of members in the Irish House of Commons, and themselves formed the Irish House of Lords. The suspension of any control or interference from England left Ireland at these men's mercy, and they soon showed that they meant to keep it for themselves. When the Catholics claimed admission to the franchise or to equal civil rights as a reward for their aid in the late struggle, their claim was rejected. A similar demand of the Presbyterians, who had formed a good half of the Volunteers, for the removal of their disabilities was equally set aside. Even Grattan, when he pleaded for a reform which would make the Parliament at least a fair representative of the Protestant Englishry, utterly failed. The ruling class found government too profitable to share it with other possessors. It was only by hard bribery that the English Government could secure their co-operation in the simplest measures of administration. "If ever there was a country unfit to govern itself," said Lord Hutchinson, "it is Ireland. A corrupt aristocracy, a ferocious commonalty, a distracted Government, a divided people!" The real character of this Parliamentary rule was seen in the rejection of Pitt's offer of free trade. In Pitt's eyes the danger of Ireland lay not so much in its factious aristocracy as in the misery of

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV. THE WAR WITH FRANCE. 1793–1815.

the people they governed. Although the Irish Catholics were held down by the brute force of their Protestant rulers, he saw that their discontent was growing fast into rebellion, and that one secret of their discontent at any rate lay in Irish poverty, a poverty increased if not originally brought about by the jealous exclusion of Irish products from their natural markets in England itself. One of his first commercial measures put an end to this exclusion by a bill which established freedom of trade between the two islands. But though he met successfully the fears and jealousies of the English farmers and manufacturers, he was foiled by the factious ignorance of the Irish landowners, and his bill was rejected by the Irish Parliament. So utterly was he discouraged that only the outbreak of the Revolutionary struggle, and the efforts which France at once made to excite rebellion amongst the Irish Catholics, roused him to fresh measures of conciliation and good government. In 1792 he forced on the Irish Parliament measures for the admission of Catholics to the electoral franchise, and to civil and military offices within the island, which promised to open a new era of religious liberty. But the promise came too late. The hope of conciliation was lost in the fast rising tide of religious and social passion. An association of "United Irishmen," begun among the Protestants of Ulster with a view of obtaining Parliamentary reform, drifted into a correspondence with France and projects of insurrection. The Catholic peasantry, brooding over their misery and their wrongs, were equally stirred by the news from France; and their discontent broke out in the outrages of "Defenders" and "Peep-o'-day Boys," who held the country in terror. For a while, however, the Protestant landowners, banded together in "Orange Societies," held the country down by sheer terror and bloodshed.

**The Union.**

At last the smouldering discontent and disaffection burst into flame. Ireland was in fact driven into rebellion by the lawless cruelty of the Orange yeomanry and the English troops. In 1796 and 1797 soldiers and yeomanry marched over the country torturing and scourging the "croppies," as the Irish insurgents were called in derision from their short-cut hair, robbing, ravishing, and murdering. Their outrages were sanctioned by a Bill of Indemnity passed by the Irish Parliament; and protected for the future by an Insurrection Act and a suspension of the Habeas Corpus. Meanwhile the United Irishmen prepared for an insurrection, which was delayed by the failure of the French expeditions on which they counted for support, and above all by the victory of Camperdown. Atrocities were answered by atrocities when the revolt at last broke out in 1798. Loyal Protestants were lashed and tortured in their turn, and every soldier taken was butchered without mercy. The rebels however no sooner mustered fifteen thousand men strong in a camp on Vinegar Hill near Enniscorthy than the camp was stormed by the English troops, and the

Digitized by Google

revolt utterly suppressed. The suppression only just came in time to prevent greater disasters. A few weeks after the close of the rebellion a thousand French soldiers under General Humbert landed in Mayo, broke a force of thrice their number in a battle at Castlebar, and only surrendered when the Lord-Lieutenant, Lord Cornwallis, faced them with thirty thousand men. Lord Cornwallis, a wise and humane ruler, found more difficulty in checking the reprisals of his troops and of the Orangemen than in stamping out the last embers of insurrection; but the hideous cruelty brought about one good result. Pitt's disgust at "the bigoted fury of Irish Protestants" ended in a firm resolve to put an end to the farce of "Independence," which left Ireland helpless in their hands. The political necessity for a union of the two islands had already been brought home to every English statesman by the course of the Irish Parliament during the disputes over the Regency; for, while England repelled the claims of the Prince of Wales to the Regency as of right, Ireland admitted them. As the only union left between the two peoples was their obedience to a common ruler, such an act might conceivably have ended in their entire severance; and the sense of this danger secured a welcome on this side of the Channel for Pitt's proposal to unite the two Parliaments. The opposition of the Irish boroughmongers was naturally stubborn and determined. But with them it was a sheer question of gold; and the assent of the Irish Parliament was bought with a million in money, and with a liberal distribution of pensions and peerages to its members. Base and shameless as such means were, Pitt may fairly plead that they were the only means by which the bill for the Union could have been passed. As the matter was finally arranged in June 1800, one hundred Irish members became part of the House of Commons at Westminster, and twenty-eight temporal with four spiritual peers, chosen for each Parliament by their fellows, took their seats in the House of Lords. Commerce between the two countries was freed from all restrictions, and all the trading privileges of the one were thrown open to the other; while taxation was proportionately distributed between the two peoples.

**Pitt and the Peerage.**

The lavish creation of peers which formed a part of the price paid for the Union of Ireland was only an instance of Pitt's deliberate policy in dealing with the peerage. If he had failed to reform the House of Commons, he was able to bring about a practical change in our constitution by his reform of the House of Lords. Few bodies have varied more in the number of their members. At the close of the Wars of the Roses only thirty lay lords remained to take their seats; in Elizabeth's reign they numbered only sixty; the prodigal creations of the Stuarts raised them to one hundred and sixty-eight. At this point, however, they practically remained stationary during the reigns of the first two Georges; and, as we have seen, only the dogged

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.
THE WAR WITH FRANCE.
1793-1815.

opposition of Walpole prevented Lord Stanhope from limiting the peerage to the number it had at that time reached. Mischievous as such a measure would have been, it would at any rate have prevented the lavish creation of peerages on which George the Third relied in the early days of his reign as one of his means of breaking up the party government which restrained him. But what was with the King a mere means of corruption became with Pitt a settled purpose of transferring the peerage from a narrow and exclusive caste into a large representation of the wealth of England. As he defined his aim, it was to use the House of Lords as a means of rewarding merit, to bring the peerage into closer relations with the landowning and opulent classes, and to render the Crown independent of factious combinations among the existing peers. While himself therefore disdainful of hereditary honours, he lavished them as no Minister had lavished them before. In his first five years of rule he created fifty new peers. In two later years alone, 1796-7, he created thirty-five. By 1801 the peerages which were the price of the Union with Ireland had helped to raise his creations to one hundred and forty-one. So busily was his example followed by his successors that at the end of George the Third's reign the number of hereditary peers had become double what it was at his accession. Nor was the change in the peerage merely one of numbers. The whole character of the House of Lords was changed. Up to this time it had been a small assembly of great nobles, bound together by family or party ties into a distinct power in the State. By pouring into it members of the middle and commercial class, who formed the basis of his political power, small landowners, bankers, merchants, nabobs, army contractors, lawyers, soldiers and seamen, Pitt revolutionized the Upper House. It became the stronghold, not of blood, but of property, the representative of the great estates and great fortunes which the vast increase of English wealth was building up. For the first time, too, in our history it became the distinctly conservative element in our constitution. The full import of Pitt's changes has still to be revealed, but in some ways their results have been very different from the end at which he aimed. The larger numbers of the peerage, though due to the will of the Crown, has practically freed the House from any influence which the Crown can exert by the distribution of honours. This change, since the power of the Crown has been practically wielded by the House of Commons, has rendered it far harder to reconcile the free action of the Lords with the regular working of constitutional government. On the other hand, the larger number of its members has rendered the House more responsive to public opinion, when public opinion is strongly pronounced; and the political tact which is inherent in great aristocratic assemblies has hitherto prevented any collision with the Lower House from being pushed to an irreconcileable quarrel. Perhaps the most direct result

Digitized by Google

of the change is seen in the undoubted popularity of the House of Lords with the mass of the people. The large number of its members, and the constant additions to them from almost every class of the community, has secured it as yet from the suspicion and ill will which in almost every other constitutional country has hampered the effective working of a second legislative chamber.

**Catholic Emancipation.**

But the legislative union of the two countries was only part of the great plan which Pitt had conceived for the conciliation of Ireland. With the conclusion of the Union his projects of free trade between the two countries, which had been defeated a few years back by the folly of the Irish Parliament, came quietly into play; and in spite of insufficient capital and social disturbance, the growth of the trade, shipping, and manufactures of Ireland has gone on without a check from that time to this. The change which brought Ireland directly under the common Parliament was followed too by a gradual revision of its oppressive laws and an amendment in their administration; taxation was lightened, and a faint beginning made of public instruction. But in Pitt's mind the great means of conciliation was the concession of religious equality. In proposing to the English Parliament the union of the two countries he had pointed out that, when thus joined to a Protestant country like England, all danger of a Catholic supremacy in Ireland, should Catholic disabilities be removed, would be practically at an end; and had suggested that in such a case "an effectual and adequate provision for the Catholic clergy" would be a security for their loyalty. His words gave strength to the hopes of "Catholic Emancipation," or the removal of the civil disabilities of Catholics, which were held out by Lord Castlereagh in Ireland itself as means of hindering any opposition to the project of Union on the part of the Catholics. It was agreed on all sides that their opposition would have secured its defeat; but no Catholic opposition showed itself. After the passing of the bill, Pitt prepared to lay before the Cabinet a measure which would have raised not only the Catholic but the Dissenter to perfect equality of civil rights. He proposed to remove all religious tests which limited the exercise of the franchise, or were required for admission to Parliament, the magistracy, the bar, municipal offices, or posts in the army or the service of the State. Political security was provided for by the imposition, in the place of the Sacramental Test, of an oath of allegiance and of fidelity to the Constitution; while the loyalty of the Catholic and Dissenting clergy was secured by the grant of some provision to both by the State. To conciliate the Church, measures were added for strengthening its means of discipline, and for increasing the stipends of its poorer ministers. A commutation of tithes was to remove a constant source of quarrel in Ireland between the episcopal clergy and the people. The scheme was too large and statesmanlike to secure the

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.

THE WAR WITH FRANCE. 1793-1815.

immediate assent of the Cabinet, and before that assent could be won the plan was communicated through the treachery of the Chancellor, Lord Loughborough, to George the Third. "I count any man my personal enemy," the King broke out angrily to Dundas, "who proposes any such measure." Pitt answered this outburst by submitting his whole plan to the King. "The political circumstances under which the exclusive laws originated," he wrote, "arising either from the conflicting power of hostile and nearly balanced sects, from the apprehension of a Popish Queen as successor, a disputed succession and a foreign pretender, a division in Europe between Catholic and Protestant Powers, are no longer applicable to the present state of things." But argument was wasted upon George the Third. In spite of the decision of the lawyers whom he consulted, the King held himself bound by his Coronation Oath to maintain the tests; and his bigotry agreed too well with the religious hatred and political distrust of the Catholics which still prevailed among the bulk of the English people not to make his decision fatal to the bill. Pitt however held firm to its principle; he resigned in February 1801, and was succeeded by the Speaker of the House of Commons, Mr. Addington, a man as dull and bigoted as George himself.

**The Addington Ministry.**

Hardly a single member of the Addington Ministry could be regarded as rising even to the second rank of political eminence, but their work was mainly one of peace. Although the debt had risen from 244 millions to 520, the desire for peace sprang from no sense of national exhaustion. On the contrary, wealth had never increased so fast. Steam and canals, with the inventions of Arkwright and Crompton, were producing their effect in a rapid development of trade and manufactures, and commerce found fresh outlets in the colonies gained by the war; for the union of Holland with the French Republic had been followed by the seizure of the Cape of Good Hope, of Ceylon, of Malacca, and of the Dutch possessions in the Spice Islands. Nor was there any ground for despondency in the aspect of the war itself. The Treaty of Luneville, as we have seen, left England alone in the struggle against France; while an armed neutrality of the Northern powers, with the Czar Peter of Russia at its head, revived the claim that a neutral flag should cover even contraband of war. But in 1800 the surrender of Malta to the English fleet gave it the mastery of the Mediterranean; and General Abercromby, landing with a small force in Aboukir Bay, defeated on the 21st of March, 1801, the French army that Buonaparte had left in Egypt, and which soon found itself forced to surrender in the Convention of Cairo. By its evacuation of Egypt, India was secured and Turkey saved from sinking into a dependency of France. In April a British fleet appeared before Copenhagen, and after a desperate struggle silenced the Danish batteries, captured the bulk of the Danish ships, and forced Denmark to with-

Digitized by Google

draw from the Northern Coalition, which was finally broken up by the death of the Czar. Both parties in this gigantic struggle however were at last anxious for peace. On the English side there was a general sense that the struggle with the Revolution was in fact at an end. Not only had England held its principles at bay, but the war had at last seated on the throne of France a military despot who hated the principles of the Revolution even more than England did. So far as France herself was concerned, the First Consul, Buonaparte, was eager at the moment for a peace which would enable him to establish his power and to crush the last sparks of freedom in the country of which he had made himself in reality the absolute master.

**Peace of Amiens.**

After long negotiations the Peace of Amiens was concluded in March, 1802, on terms of mutual restitution. France promised to retire from Southern Italy, and to leave the new republics it had established in the countries along its border to themselves. England engaged to give up her newly conquered colonies save Ceylon, and to replace the Knights of St. John in the isle of Malta. "It is a peace which everybody is glad of and nobody is proud of," said a witty critic; but there was a general sense of relief at the close of the long struggle, and the new French ambassador was drawn in triumph on his arrival through the streets of London. But the Peace brought no rest to Buonaparte's ambition. It was soon plain that England would have to bear the brunt of a new contest, but of a contest wholly different in kind from that which the Peace had put an end to. Whatever had been the errors of the French Revolutionists, even their worst attacks on the independence of the nations around them had been veiled by a vague notion of freeing the peoples whom they invaded from the yoke of their rulers. But the aim of Buonaparte was simply that of a vulgar conqueror. He was resolute to be master of the western world, and no notions of popular freedom or sense of national right ever interfered with his resolve. The means at his command were immense. The political life of the Revolution had been cut short by his military despotism, but the new social vigour it had given to France through the abolition of privileges and the creation of a new middle class on the ruins of the clergy and the nobles still lived on. While the dissensions which tore France asunder were hushed by the policy of the First Consul, by his restoration of the Church as a religious power, his recall of the exiles, and the economy and wise administration which distinguished his rule, the centralized system of government bequeathed by the Monarchy to the Revolution and by the Revolution to Buonaparte enabled him easily to seize this national vigour for the profit of his own despotism. The exhaustion of the brilliant hopes raised by the Revolution, the craving for public order, the military enthusiasm and the impulse of a new

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.
THE WAR WITH FRANCE.
1793-1815.

glory given by the wonderful victories France had won, made a Tyranny possible; and in the hands of Buonaparte this tyranny was supported by a secret police, by the suppression of the press and of all freedom of opinion, and above all by the iron will and immense ability of the First Consul himself. Once chosen Consul for life, he felt himself secure at home, and turned restlessly to the work of outer aggression. The republics established on the borders of France were brought into mere dependence on his will. Piedmont and Parma were annexed to France; and a French army occupied Switzerland. The temperate protests of the English Government were answered by demands for the expulsion of the French exiles who had been living in England ever since the Revolution, and for its surrender of Malta, which was retained till some security could be devised against a fresh seizure of the island by the French fleet. It was plain that a struggle was inevitable; and in May 1803 the armaments preparing in the French ports hastened the formal declaration of war.

Trafalgar.

Whatever differences might have parted Whig from Tory in the earlier war with the Revolution, all were at one in the war against the ambition of Buonaparte. England was now the one country where freedom in any sense remained alive. "Every other monument of European liberty has perished," cried Sir James Mackintosh, one of the most eminent of the Whig leaders. "That ancient fabric which has been gradually raised by the wisdom and virtue of our forefathers still stands; but it stands alone, and it stands among ruins!" With the fall of England despotism would have been universal throughout Europe; and it was at England that Buonaparte resolved to strike the first blow in his career of conquest. "Fifteen millions of people," he said, in allusion to the disproportion between the population of England and France, "must give way to forty millions." His attempt to strike at the English power in India through the Mahrattas of the central provinces was foiled by their defeat at Assaye; but an invasion of England itself was planned on a gigantic scale. A camp of one hundred thousand men was formed at Boulogne, and a host of flat-bottomed boats gathered for their conveyance across the Channel. The peril of the nation not only united all political parties but recalled Pitt to power. On the retirement of Addington in 1804, Pitt proposed to include Fox and the leading Whigs in his new Ministry, but he was foiled by the bigotry of the King; and the refusal of Lord Grenville and of Wyndham to take office without Fox, as well as the loss of his post at a later time by his ablest supporter, Dundas, left Pitt almost alone. His health was broken and his appearance was haggard and depressed; but he faced difficulty and danger with the same courage as of old. The invasion seemed imminent when Napoleon, who had now assumed the title of Emperor, appeared in the camp at

Digitized by Google

Boulogne. "Let us be masters of the Channel for six hours," he is reported to have said, "and we are masters of the world." A skilfully combined plan by which the British fleet would have been divided, while the whole French navy was concentrated in the Channel, was delayed by the death of the admiral destined to execute it. But an alliance with Spain placed the Spanish fleet at Napoleon's disposal in 1805, and he formed a fresh scheme for its union with that of France, the crushing of the squadron under Cornwallis which blocked the ports of the Channel before Admiral Nelson could come to its support, and a crossing of the vast armament thus protected to the English shore. Three hundred thousand volunteers mustered in England to meet the coming attack; but Pitt trusted more to a new league which he had succeeded in forming on the Continent itself. The annexation of Genoa by Napoleon aided him in this effort; and Russia, Austria, and Sweden joined in an alliance to wrest Italy and the Low Countries from the grasp of the French Emperor. Napoleon meanwhile swept the sea in vain for a glimpse of the great armament whose assembly in the Channel he had so skilfully planned. Admiral Villeneuve, uniting the Spanish ships at Corunna with his own squadron from Toulon, drew Nelson in pursuit to the West Indies, and then suddenly returning to Cadiz hastened to unite with the French squadron at Brest and crush the English fleet in the Channel. But a headlong pursuit brought Nelson up with him ere the manœuvre was complete, and the two fleets met on the 21st of October, 1805, off Cape Trafalgar. "England," ran Nelson's famous signal, "expects every man to do his duty;" and though he fell himself in the hour of victory, twenty French sail had struck their flag ere the day was done. "England has saved herself by her courage," Pitt said in what were destined to be his last public words: "she will save Europe by her example!" But even before the victory of Trafalgar Napoleon had abandoned the dream of invading England to meet the coalition in his rear; and swinging round his forces on the Danube he forced an Austrian army to a shameful capitulation in Ulm three days before his final naval defeat. From Ulm he marched on Vienna, and crushed the combined armies of Austria and Russia in the battle of Austerlitz. "Austerlitz," Wilberforce wrote in his diary, "killed Pitt." Though he was still but forty-seven, the hollow voice and wasted frame of the great Minister had long told that death was near; and the blow to his hopes proved fatal. "Roll up that map," he said, pointing to a map of Europe which hung upon the wall; "it will not be wanted these ten years!" Once only he rallied from stupor; and those who bent over him caught a faint murmur of "My country! How I leave my country!" On the 23rd of January, 1806, he breathed his last; and was laid in Westminster Abbey in the grave of Chatham. "What grave," exclaimed Lord Wellesley, "contains such a father and such a son! What

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.
THE WAR WITH FRANCE.
1793-1815.

sepulchre embosoms the remains of so much human excellence and glory!"

So great was felt to be the loss that nothing but the union of parties, which Pitt had in vain desired during his lifetime, could fill up the gap left by his death. In the new Ministry Fox, with the small body of popular Whigs who were bent on peace and internal reform, united with the aristocratic Whigs under Lord Grenville and with the Tories under Lord Sidmouth. All home questions, in fact, were subordinated to the need of saving Europe from the ambition of France, and in the resolve to save Europe Fox was as resolute as Pitt himself. His hopes of peace, indeed, were stronger; but they were foiled by the evasive answer which Napoleon gave to his overtures, and by a new war which he undertook against Prussia, the one power which seemed able to resist the arms of France. By the fatal indecision of the Ministry Prussia was left unaided till it was too late to aid her; and on the 14th of October, 1806, the decisive victory of Jena laid North Germany at Napoleon's feet. Death had saved Fox only a month before from witnessing the overthrow of his hopes; and his loss weakened the Grenville Cabinet at the moment when one of its greatest errors opened a new and more desperate struggle with France. By a violent stretch of her rights as a combatant England declared the whole coast occupied by France and its allies, from Dantzig to Trieste, to be in a state of blockade. It was impossible to enforce such a "paper blockade," even by the immense force at her disposal; and Napoleon seized on the opportunity to retaliate by the entire exclusion of British commerce from the Continent, an exclusion which he trusted would end the war by the ruin it would bring on the English manufacturers. Decrees issued from Berlin and Milan ordered the seizure of all British exports and of vessels which had touched at any British port. The result of these decrees would, he hoped, prove the ruin of the carrying trade of Britain, which would pass into the hands of neutrals and especially of the Americans; and it was to prevent this result that the Grenville Ministry issued Orders in Council in January 1807 by which neutral vessels voyaging to coasts subject to the blockade already declared were compelled on pain of seizure to touch previously at some British port. The germs of a yet wider struggle lay in these Orders; but the fall of the Grenville Ministry was due not so much to its reckless foreign policy as to its wise and generous policy at home. Its greatest work, the abolition of the Slave Trade in February, was done in the teeth of a vigorous opposition from the Tories and the merchants of Liverpool; and the first indications of a desire to bring about Catholic Emancipation was met on the part of the King by the demand of a pledge not to meddle with the question, and by the dismissal of the Ministry in March on their refusal to give it.

**The Grenville Ministry.**

**anning.**

The dismissal of the Grenville Ministry broke up the union of

Digitized by Google

parties; and from this time to the end of the war England was wholly governed by the Tories. The nominal head of the Ministry which succeeded that of Lord Grenville was the Duke of Portland; its guiding spirit was the Foreign Secretary, George Canning, a young and devoted adherent of Pitt, whose brilliant rhetoric gave him power over the House of Commons, while the vigour and breadth of his mind gave a new energy and colour to the war. At no time had opposition to Napoleon seemed so hopeless. From Berlin the Emperor marched into the heart of Poland, and though checked in the winter by the Russian forces in the hard-fought battle of Eylau, his victory of Friedland brought the Czar Alexander in the summer of 1807 to consent to the Peace of Tilsit. From foes the two Emperors of the West and the East became friends, and the hope of French aid in the conquest of Turkey drew Alexander to a close alliance with Napoleon. Russia not only enforced the Berlin decrees against British commerce, but forced Sweden, the one ally which England still retained on the Continent, to renounce her alliance. The Russian and Swedish fleets were thus placed at the service of France, and the two Emperors counted on securing the fleet of Denmark, and threatening by this union the maritime supremacy which formed England's real defence. The hope was foiled by the appearance off Elsinore in July 1807 of an expedition, promptly and secretly equipped by Canning, with a demand for the surrender of the Danish fleet into the hands of England, on pledge of its return at the close of the war. On the refusal of the Danes the demand was enforced by a bombardment of Copenhagen; and the whole Danish fleet with a vast mass of naval stores were carried to British ports. But whatever Canning did to check France at sea, he could do nothing to arrest her progress on land. Napoleon was drunk with success. He was absolutely master of Western Europe, and its whole face changed as at an enchanter's touch. Prussia was occupied by French troops. Holland was changed into a monarchy by a simple decree of the French Emperor, and its crown bestowed on his brother Louis. Another brother, Jerome, became King of Westphalia, a new realm built up out of the Electorates of Hesse Cassel and Hanover. A third brother, Joseph, was made King of Naples; while the rest of Italy, and even Rome itself, was annexed to the French Empire.

**The Peninsular War.**

As little opposition met Napoleon's first aggressions in the Peninsula. In the Treaty of Fontainebleau (Oct. 1807) France and Spain agreed to divide Portugal between them; and the reigning House of Braganza fled helplessly from Lisbon to a refuge in Brazil. But the seizure of Portugal was only meant as a prelude to the seizure of Spain. Charles the Fourth, whom a riot in his capital had driven to abdication, and his son Ferdinand the Seventh were drawn to Bayonne in May 1808 on pretext of an interview with the Emperor, and forced to resign their claims to the Spanish crown, while the French army

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.
THE WAR WITH FRANCE.
1793-1815.

entered Madrid and proclaimed Joseph Buonaparte King of Spain. This infamous act of treachery was hardly completed when Spain rose as one man against the stranger; and desperate as the effort of its people seemed, the news of the rising was welcomed throughout England with a burst of enthusiastic joy. "Hitherto," cried Sheridan, a leader of the Whig opposition, "Buonaparte has contended with princes without dignity, numbers without ardour, or peoples without patriotism. He has yet to learn what it is to combat a people who are animated by one spirit against him." Tory and Whig alike held that "never had so happy an opportunity existed for Britain to strike a bold stroke for the rescue of the world;" and Canning at once resolved to change the system of desultory descents on colonies and sugar islands for a vigorous warfare in the Peninsula. Supplies were sent to the Spanish insurgents with reckless profusion, and two small armies placed under the command of Sir John Moore and Sir Arthur Wellesley for service in the Peninsula. In July 1808 the surrender at Baylen of a French force which had invaded Andalusia gave the first shock to the power of Napoleon, and the blow was followed by one almost as severe. Landing at the Mondego with fifteen thousand men, Sir Arthur Wellesley drove the French army of Portugal from the field of Vimiera, and forced it to surrender in the Convention of Cintra on the 30th of August. In Spain itself the tide of success was soon roughly turned by the appearance of Napoleon with an army of two hundred thousand men; and Moore, who had advanced from Lisbon to Salamanca to support the Spanish armies, found them crushed on the Ebro, and was forced to fall hastily back on the coast. His force saved its honour in a battle before Corunna on the 16th of January, 1809, which enabled it to embark in safety; but elsewhere all seemed lost. The whole of northern and central Spain was held by the French armies; and even Zaragoza, which had once heroically repulsed them, submitted after a second desperate siege.

**Wellesley.**

The landing of the wreck of Moore's army and the news of the Spanish defeats turned the temper of England from the wildest hope to the deepest despair; but Canning remained unmoved. On the day of the evacuation of Corunna he signed a treaty of alliance with the Spanish Junta at Cadiz; and the English force at Lisbon, which had already prepared to leave Portugal, was reinforced with thirteen thousand fresh troops and placed under the command of Sir Arthur Wellesley. "Portugal," Wellesley wrote coolly, "may be defended against any force which the French can bring against it." At this critical moment the best of the French troops with the Emperor himself were drawn from the Peninsula to the Danube; for the Spanish rising had roused Austria as well as England to a renewal of the struggle. When Marshal Soult therefore threatened Lisbon from the north, Wellesley marched boldly against him, drove him from Oporto

Digitized by Google

in a disastrous retreat, and suddenly changing his line of operations pushed with twenty thousand men by Abrantes on Madrid. He was joined on the march by a Spanish force of thirty thousand men; and a bloody action of two days with a French army of equal force at Talavera on the 27th of July, 1809, restored the renown of English arms. The losses on both sides were enormous, and the French fell back at the close of the struggle; but the fruits of the victory were lost by the sudden appearance of Soult on the English line of advance, and Wellesley was forced to retreat hastily on Badajoz. His failure was embittered by heavier disasters elsewhere. Austria was driven to sue for peace by Napoleon's victory at Wagram; and a force of forty thousand English soldiers which had been despatched against Antwerp in July returned home baffled after losing half its numbers in the marshes of Walcheren.

**Torres Vedras.**

The failure at Walcheren brought about the fall of the Portland Ministry. Canning attributed the disaster to the incompetence of Lord Castlereagh, an Irish peer who after taking the chief part in bringing about the union between England and Ireland had been raised by the Duke of Portland to the post of Secretary at War; and the quarrel between the two Ministers ended in a duel and in their resignation of their offices (Sept. 1809). The Duke of Portland retired; and a new Ministry was formed out of the more Tory members of the late administration under the guidance of Spencer Perceval, an industrious mediocrity of the narrowest type; the Marquis of Wellesley, a brother of the English general in Spain, becoming Foreign Secretary. But if Perceval and his colleagues possessed few of the higher qualities of statesmanship, they had one characteristic which in the actual position of English affairs was beyond all price. They were resolute to continue the war. In the nation at large the fit of enthusiasm had been followed by a fit of despair; and the City of London even petitioned for a withdrawal of the English forces from the Peninsula. Napoleon seemed irresistible, and now that Austria was crushed and England stood alone in opposition to him, the Emperor resolved to put an end to the strife by a strict enforcement of the Continental System and a vigorous prosecution of the war in Spain. Andalusia, the one province which remained independent, was invaded in the opening of 1810, and with the exception of Cadiz reduced to submission. Marshal Massena with a fine army of eighty thousand men marched upon Lisbon. Even Perceval abandoned all hope of preserving a hold on the Peninsula in face of these new efforts, and threw on Wellesley, who had been raised to the peerage as Lord Wellington after Talavera, the responsibility of resolving to remain there. But the cool judgment and firm temper which distinguished Wellington enabled him to face a responsibility from which weaker men would have shrunk. "I conceive," he answered, "that the honour and interest of our country require that



Digitized by Google

SEC. IV. THE WAR WITH FRANCE. 1793-1815.

we should hold our ground here as long as possible; and, please God, I will maintain it as long as I can." By the addition of Portuguese troops who had been trained under British officers, his army was now raised to fifty thousand men; and though his inferiority in force compelled him to look on while Massena reduced the frontier fortresses of Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida, he inflicted on him a heavy check at the heights of Busaco, and finally fell back in October 1810 on three lines of defence which he had secretly constructed at Torres Vedras, along a chain of mountain heights crowned with redoubts and bristling with cannon. The position was impregnable; and able and stubborn as Massena was he found himself forced after a month's fruitless efforts to fall back in a masterly retreat; but so terrible were the privations of the French army in passing again through the wasted country that it was only with forty thousand men that he reached Ciudad Rodrigo in the spring of 1811. Reinforced by fresh troops, Massena turned fiercely to the relief of Almeida, which Wellington had besieged; but 2 days' bloody and obstinate fighting on the 5th of May, 1811, failed to drive the English army from its position at Fuentes d'Onoro, and the Marshal fell back on Salamanca and relinquished his effort to drive Wellington from Portugal.

**England and America.**

Great as was the effect of Torres Vedras in restoring the spirit of the English people and in reviving throughout Europe the hope of resistance to the tyranny of Napoleon, its immediate result was little save the deliverance of Portugal. The French remained masters of all Spain save Cadiz and the eastern provinces, and even the east coast was reduced in 1811 by the vigour of General Suchet. An attempt of Wellington to retake Badajoz was foiled by the co-operation of the army of the South under Marshal Soult with that of the North under Marshal Marmont; and a fruitless attack on Almeida wasted the rest of the year. Not only was the French hold on Spain too strong to be shaken by the force at Wellington's disposal, but the Continental System of Napoleon was beginning to involve England in dangers which he was far from having foreseen. His effort to exclude English exports from the Continent had been foiled by the rise of a vast system of contraband trade, by the evasions practised in the Prussian and Russian ports, and by the rapid development of the carrying trade under neutral flags. The French army itself was clad in great coats made at Leeds, and shod with shoes from Northampton. But if Napoleon's direct blow at England had failed to bring about any serious results, the Orders in Council with which the Grenville Ministry had attempted to prevent the transfer of the carrying trade from English to neutral ships, by compelling all vessels on their way to ports under blockade to touch at British harbours, had at once created serious embarrassments with America. A year after the issue of these Orders America replied to both combatants by a Non-Intercourse Act

Digitized by Google

(March 1808), which suspended all trade between either France or England and the United States. Napoleon adroitly met this measure by an offer to withdraw the restrictions he had imposed on neutral trade if America compelled England to show equal respect to her flag; but no concession could be obtained from the Perceval Cabinet. The quarrel between the two countries was embittered by the assertion on England's side of a "right of search," which compelled American vessels to surrender any British subjects who formed part of their crew and who were claimed as deserters from the English navy. In 1811 Napoleon fulfilled his pledge of removing all obstacles to American trade, and America repealed the Non-Intercourse Act as far as it related to France. But no corresponding concession could be wrung from the English Government; though the closing of the American ports inflicted a heavier blow on British commerce than any which the Orders could have aimed at preventing. During 1811 indeed English exports were reduced by one-third of their whole amount. In America the irritation at last brought about a cry for war which, in spite of the resolute opposition of the New England States, forced Congress to raise an army of twenty-five thousand men, and to declare the impressment of seamen sailing under an American flag to be piracy. England at last consented to withdraw her Orders in Council, but the concession was made too late to avert a declaration of war on the part of the United States in June, 1812.

**Salamanca and Moscow.**

The moment when America entered into the great struggle was a critical moment in the history of mankind. Six days after President Madison issued his declaration of war, Napoleon crossed the Niemen on his march to Moscow. Successful as his Continental System had been in stirring up war between England and America, it had been no less successful in breaking the alliance which he had made with the Emperor Alexander at Tilsit and in forcing on a contest with Russia which was destined to be a fatal one. On the one hand, Napoleon was irritated by the refusal of Russia to enforce strictly the suspension of all trade with England, though such a suspension would have ruined the Russian landowners. On the other, the Czar saw with growing anxiety the advance of the French Empire which sprang from Napoleon's resolve to enforce his system by a seizure of the northern coasts. In 1811 Holland, the Hanseatic towns, part of Westphalia, and the Duchy of Oldenburg were successively annexed, and the Duchy of Mecklenburg threatened with seizure. A peremptory demand on the part of France for the entire cessation of intercourse with England brought the quarrel to a head; and preparations were made on both sides for a gigantic struggle. The best of the French soldiers were drawn from Spain to the frontier of Poland; and Wellington, whose army had been raised to a force of forty thousand Englishmen and twenty thousand Portuguese, profited by the withdrawal to throw



Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.
THE WAR WITH FRANCE.
1793-1815.

off his system of defence and to assume an attitude of attack. Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz were taken by storm during the spring of 1812; and three days before Napoleon crossed the Niemen (June 24) in his march on Moscow, Wellington crossed the Agueda in a march on Salamanca. After a series of masterly movements on both sides, Marmont with the French army of the North attacked the English on the hills in the neighbourhood of that town (July 22). While marching round the right of the English position, the French left wing was left isolated; and with a sudden exclamation of "Marmont is lost!" Wellington flung on it the bulk of his force, crushed it, and drove the whole army from the field. The loss on either side was nearly equal, but failure had demoralized the French army; and its retreat forced Joseph to leave Madrid, and Soult to evacuate Andalusia and to concentrate the southern army on the eastern coast. While Napoleon was still pushing slowly over the vast plains of Poland, Wellington made his entry into Madrid in August, and began the siege of Burgos. The town however held out gallantly for a month, till the advance of the two French armies, now concentrated in the north and south of Spain, forced Wellington (Oct. 18) to a hasty retreat on the Portuguese frontier. A day later (Oct. 19) began the more fatal retreat of the Grand Army from Moscow. Victorious in the battle of Borodino, Napoleon had entered the older capital of Russia in triumph, and waited impatiently to receive proposals of peace from the Czar, when a fire kindled by its own inhabitants reduced the city to ashes. The French army was forced to fall back amidst the horrors of a Russian winter. Of the four hundred thousand combatants who formed the Grand Army at its first outset, only a few thousand recrossed the Niemen in December.

**The Liverpool Ministry.**

Gallantly as Napoleon was still to struggle against the foes who sprang up around him, his ruin became certain from the hour when he fell back from Moscow. But a new English Ministry reaped the glory of success in the long struggle with his ambition. A return of the King's madness had made it necessary in the beginning of 1811 to confer the Regency by Act of Parliament on the Prince of Wales; and the Whig sympathies of the Prince threatened the Perceval Cabinet with dismissal. The insecurity of their position told on the conduct of the war; for much of Wellington's apparent inactivity during 1811 was really due to the hesitation and timidity of the Ministers at home. In March 1812 the assassination of Perceval by a maniac named Bellingham brought about the fall of his Ministry and fresh efforts to install the Whigs in office. But the attempt was as fruitless as ever, and the old Ministry was restored under the guidance of the Earl of Liverpool, a man of no great abilities, but temperate, well informed, and endowed with a singular gift of holding discordant colleagues together. But the death of Perceval marks more than a

Digitized by Google

mere change of Ministry. From that moment the developement of English life, which had been roughly arrested in 1792 by the reaction against the French Revolution, began again to take its natural course. The anti-revolutionary terror which Burke did so much to rouse had spent most of its force by the time of the Peace of Amiens; and though the country was unanimous in the after-struggle against the ambition of Buonaparte, the social distress which followed on the renewal of the war revived questions of internal reform which had been set aside ever since the outbreak of the French Revolution as Jacobinical. The natural relation of trade and commerce to the general wealth of the people at large was disturbed by the peculiar circumstances of the time. The war enriched the landowner, the capitalist, the manufacturer, the farmer; but it impoverished the poor. It is indeed from the fatal years which lie between the Peace of Amiens and Waterloo that we must date that war of classes, that social severance between rich and poor, between employers and employed, which still forms the great difficulty of English politics.

**The State of the Country.**

The increase of wealth was indeed enormous. England was sole mistress of the seas. The war had given her possession of the colonies of Spain, of Holland, and of France; and if her trade was checked for a time by the Berlin decrees, the efforts of Napoleon were soon rendered fruitless by the vast smuggling system which sprang up along the coast of North Germany. In spite of the far more serious blow which commerce received from the quarrel with America, English exports nearly doubled in the last fifteen years of the war. Manufactures profited by the great discoveries of Watt and Arkwright; and the consumption of raw cotton in the mills of Lancashire, rose during the same period from fifty to a hundred millions of pounds. The vast accumulation of capital, as well as the constant recurrence of bad seasons at this time, told upon the land, and forced agriculture into a feverish and unhealthy prosperity. Wheat rose to famine prices, and the value of land rose in proportion with the price of wheat. Inclosures went on with prodigious rapidity; the income of every landowner was doubled, while the farmers were able to introduce improvements into the processes of agriculture which changed the whole face of the country. But if the increase of wealth was enormous, its distribution was partial. During the fifteen years which preceded Waterloo, the number of the population rose from ten to thirteen millions, and this rapid increase kept down the rate of wages, which would naturally have advanced in a corresponding degree with the increase in the national wealth. Even manufactures, though destined in the long run to benefit the labouring classes, seemed at first rather to depress them. One of the earliest results of the introduction of machinery was the ruin of a number of small trades which were carried on at home, and the pauperization of families who relied on them for support. In the winter of 1811 the ter-

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV. THE WAR WITH FRANCE. 1793-1815.

rible pressure of this transition from handicraft to machinery was seen in the Luddite, or machine-breaking, riots which broke out over the northern and midland counties; and which were only suppressed by military force. While labour was thus thrown out of its older grooves, and the rate of wages kept down at an artificially low figure by the rapid increase of population, the rise in the price of wheat, which brought wealth to the landowner and the farmer, brought famine and death to the poor, for England was cut off by the war from the vast corn-fields of the Continent or of America, which now-a-days redress from their abundance the results of a bad harvest. Scarcity was followed by a terrible pauperization of the labouring classes. The amount of the poor-rate rose fifty per cent; and with the increase of poverty followed its inevitable result, the increase of crime.

**Revival of Reform.**

The sense both of national glory and of national suffering told, however feebly, on the course of politics at home. Under the Perceval Ministry a blind opposition had been offered by the Government to every project of change or reform: but the terror-struck reaction against the French Revolution which this opposition strove to perpetuate was even then passing away. The publication of the *Edinburgh Review* in 1802 by a knot of young lawyers at Edinburgh, (Brougham, Jeffrey, Horner, and Mackintosh,) marked the revival of the policy of constitutional and administrative progress which had been reluctantly abandoned by William Pitt. Jeremy Bentham gave a new vigour to political speculation by his advocacy of the doctrine of Utility, and his definition of "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" as the aim of political action. In 1809 Sir Francis Burdett revived the question of Parliamentary Reform. Only fifteen members supported his motion; and a reference to the House of Commons, in a pamphlet which he subsequently published, as "a part of our fellow-subjects collected together by means which it is not necessary to describe" was met by his committal to the Tower, where he remained till the prorogation of the Parliament. A far greater effect was produced by the perseverance with which Canning pressed year by year the question of Catholic Emancipation. So long as Perceval lived both efforts at Reform were equally vain; but on the accession of Lord Liverpool to power the advancing strength of a more liberal sentiment in the nation was felt by the policy of "moderate concession" which was adopted by the new Ministry. Catholic Emancipation became an open question in the Cabinet itself, and was adopted in 1812 by a triumphant majority in the House of Commons, though still rejected by the Lords.

**Fall of Napoleon.**

From this moment, however, all questions of home politics were again thrown into the background by the absorbing interest of the war. In spite of the gigantic efforts which Napoleon made to repair the loss of the Grand Army, the spell which he had cast over Europe was broken by the retreat from Moscow. Prussia rose against him as the Russian

Digitized by Google

army advanced across the Niemen, and the French were at once thrown back on the Elbe. In May 1813 Wellington again left Portugal with an army which had now risen to ninety thousand men; and overtaking the French forces in retreat at Vittoria inflicted on them a defeat (June 21) which drove them in utter rout across the Pyrenees. Madrid was at once evacuated; and Clauzel fell back from Zaragoza into France. The victory not only freed Spain from its invaders; it restored the spirit of the Allies at the darkest hour of their new fortunes. The genius of Napoleon rose to its height in his last campaigns. With a fresh army of two hundred thousand men whom he had gathered at Mainz he marched on the allied armies of Russia and Prussia in May, cleared Saxony by a victory over them at Lutzen, and threw them back on the Oder by a fresh victory at Bautzen. Disheartened by defeat, and by the neutral attitude which Austria still preserved, the two powers consented in June to an armistice, and negotiated for peace; but the loss of Spain and Wellington's advance on the Pyrenees gave a new vigour to their counsels. The close of the armistice was followed by the union of Austria with the Allied Powers; and a terrible overthrow of Napoleon at Leipzig in October forced the French army to cross the Rhine. Meanwhile the sieges of San Sebastian and of Pampeluna, with the obstinate defence of Marshal Soult in the Pyrenees, held Wellington for a time at bay; and it was only in October that a victory on the Bidassoa enabled him to enter France and to force Soult from his entrenched camp before Bayonne. But the war was now hurrying to its close. On the last day of 1813 the allies crossed the Rhine, and in a month a third of France had passed without opposition into their hands. Soult, again defeated by Wellington at Orthez, fell back on Toulouse: and Bordeaux, then left uncovered, hardly waited the arrival of the English forces to hoist the white flag of the Bourbons. On the 10th of April, 1814, Wellington again attacked Soult at Toulouse in an obstinate and indecisive engagement; but though neither general knew it, the war was at that moment at an end. The wonderful struggle which Napoleon with a handful of men had maintained for two months against the overwhelming forces of the Allies closed with the surrender of Paris on the 31st of March; and the submission of the capital was at once followed by the abdication of the Emperor and the return of the Bourbons.

**The America War.**

England's triumph over its great enemy was dashed by the more doubtful fortunes of the struggle which Napoleon had kindled across the Atlantic. The declaration of war by America in June 1812 seemed an act of sheer madness. The American navy consisted of a few frigates and sloops; its army was a mass of half-drilled and half-armed recruits; the States themselves were divided on the question of the war; and Connecticut with Massachusetts refused to send either money or men. Three attempts to penetrate into Canada during the

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.
THE WAR WITH FRANCE.
1793-1815.

summer and autumn were repulsed with heavy loss. But these failures were more than redeemed by unexpected successes at sea. In two successive engagements between English and American frigates, the former were forced to strike their flag. The effect of these victories was out of all proportion to their real importance; for they were the first heavy blows which had been dealt at England's supremacy over the seas. In 1813 America followed up its naval triumphs by more vigorous efforts on land. Its forces cleared Lake Ontario, captured Toronto, destroyed the British flotilla on Lake Erie, and made themselves masters of Upper Canada. An attack on Lower Canada, however, was successfully beaten back; and a fresh advance of the British and Canadian forces in the heart of the winter again recovered the Upper Province. The reverse gave fresh strength to the party in the United States which had throughout been opposed to the war, and whose opposition to it had been embittered by the terrible distress brought about by the blockade and the ruin of American commerce. Cries of secession began to be heard, and Massachusetts took the bold step of appointing delegates to confer with delegates from the other New England States "on the subject of their grievances and common concerns." In 1814, however, the war was renewed with more vigour than ever. Upper Canada was again invaded, but the American army, after inflicting a severe defeat on the British forces in the battle of Chippewa in July, was itself defeated a few weeks after in an equally stubborn engagement, and thrown back on its own frontier. The fall of Napoleon now enabled the English Government to devote its whole strength to the struggle with an enemy which it had at last ceased to despise. General Rose, with a force of four thousand men, appeared in the Potomac, captured Washington, and before evacuating the city burnt its public buildings to the ground. Few more shameful acts are recorded in our history; and it was the more shameful in that it was done under strict orders from the Government at home. The raid upon Washington, however, was intended simply to strike terror into the American people; and the real stress of the war was thrown on two expeditions whose business was to penetrate into the States from the north and from the south. Both proved utter failures. A force of nine thousand Peninsular veterans which marched in September to the attack of Plattsburg on Lake Champlain was forced to fall back by the defeat of the English flotilla which accompanied it. A second force under General Packenham appeared in December at the mouth of the Mississippi and attacked New Orleans, but was repulsed by General Jackson with the loss of half its numbers. Peace, however, had already been concluded. The close of the French war removed the causes of the struggle, and the claims, whether of the English or of the Americans, were set aside in silence in the new treaty of 1814.

Digitized by Google

**Return of Napoleon.**

The close of the war with America freed England's hands at a moment when the reappearance of Napoleon at Paris called her to a new and final struggle with France. By treaty with the Allied Powers Napoleon had been suffered to retain a fragment of his former empire —the island of Elba off the coast of Tuscany; and from Elba he had looked on at the quarrels which sprang up between his conquerors as soon as they gathered at Vienna to complete the settlement of Europe. The most formidable of these quarrels arose from the claim of Prussia to annex Saxony and that of Russia to annex Poland; but their union for this purpose was met by a counter-league of England and Austria with their old enemy, France, whose ambassador, Talleyrand, laboured vigorously to bring the question to an issue by force of arms. At the moment, however, when a war between the two leagues seemed close at hand, Napoleon quitted Elba, landed on the 1st March, 1815, on the coast near Cannes, and, followed only by a thousand of his guards, marched over the mountains of Dauphiné upon Grenoble and Lyons. He counted, and counted justly, on the indifference of the country to its new Bourbon rulers, on the longing of the army for a fresh struggle which should restore its glory, and above all in the spell of his name over soldiers whom he had so often led to victory. In twenty days from his landing he reached the Tuileries unopposed, while Lewis the Eighteenth fled helplessly to Ghent. But whatever hopes he had drawn from the divisions of the Allied Powers were at once dispelled by their resolute action on the news of his descent upon France. Their strife was hushed and their old union restored by the consciousness of a common danger. A Declaration adopted instantly by all put Napoleon to the ban of Europe. "In breaking the convention which had established him in the island of Elba, Buonaparte has destroyed the sole legal title to which his political existence is attached. By reappearing in France with projects of trouble and overthrow he has not less deprived himself of the protection of the laws, and made it evident in the face of the universe that there can no longer be either peace or truce with him. The Powers, therefore, declare that Buonaparte has placed himself out of the pale of civil and social relations, and that as the general enemy and disturber of the world he is abandoned to public justice." An engagement to supply a million of men for the purposes of the war, and a recall of their armies to the Rhine, gave practical effect to the words of the Allies. England furnished subsidies to the amount of eleven millions to support these enormous hosts, and hastened to place an army on the frontier of the Netherlands. The best troops of the force which had been employed in the Peninsula, however, were still across the Atlantic; and of the eighty thousand men who gathered round Wellington only about a half were Englishmen, the rest principally raw levies from Belgium and Hanover. The Duke's plan was to unite with the one hundred and fifty thousand

Digitized by Google

SEC. IV.
THE WAR WITH FRANCE.
1793-1815.
Waterloo.

Prussians under Marshal Blucher who were advancing on the Lower Rhine, and to enter France by Mons and Namur while the forces of Austria and Russia closed in upon Paris by way of Belfort and Elsass.

But Napoleon had thrown aside all thought of a merely defensive war. By amazing efforts he had raised an army of two hundred and fifty thousand men in the few months since his arrival in Paris; and in the opening of June one hundred and twenty thousand Frenchmen were concentrated on the Sambre at Charleroi, while Wellington's troops still lay in cantonments on the line of the Scheldt from Ath to Nivelles, and Blucher's on that of the Meuse from Nivelles to Liege. Both the allied armies hastened to unite at Quatre Bras; but their junction was already impossible. Blucher with eighty thousand men was himself attacked on the 16th by Napoleon at Ligny, and after a desperate contest driven back with terrible loss upon Wavre. On the same day Ney with twenty thousand men, and an equal force under D'Erlon in reserve, appeared before Quatre Bras, where as yet only ten thousand English and the same force of Belgian troops had been able to assemble. The Belgians broke before the charges of the French horse; but the dogged resistance of the English infantry gave time for Wellington to bring up corps after corps, till at the close of the day Ney saw himself heavily outnumbered, and withdrew baffled from the field. About five thousand men had fallen on either side in this fierce engagement: but heavy as was Wellington's loss, the firmness of the English army had already done much to foil Napoleon's effort at breaking through the line of the Allies. Blucher's retreat, however, left the English flank uncovered; and on the following day, while the Prussians were falling back on Wavre, Wellington with nearly seventy thousand men—for his army was now well in hand—withdrew in good order upon Waterloo, followed by the mass of the French forces under the Emperor himself. Napoleon had detached Marshal Grouchy with thirty thousand men to hang upon the rear of the beaten Prussians, while with a force of eighty thousand men he resolved to bring Wellington to battle. On the morning of the 18th of June the two armies faced one another on the field of Waterloo in front of the forest of Soignies, on the high road to Brussels. Napoleon's one fear had been that of a continued retreat. "I have them!" he cried, as he saw the English line drawn up on a low rise of ground which stretched across the high road from the château of Hougomont on its right to the farm and straggling village of La Haye Sainte on its left. He had some grounds for his confidence of success. On either side the forces numbered between seventy and eighty thousand men: but the French were superior in guns and cavalry, and a large part of Wellington's force consisted of Belgian levies who broke and fled at the outset of the fight. A fierce attack upon Hougomont opened the battle at eleven; but it was not till midday that the corps of D'Erlon advanced upon the centre

Digitized by Google

near La Haye Sainte, which from that time bore the main brunt of the struggle. Never has greater courage, whether of attack or endurance, been shown on any field than was shown by both combatants at Waterloo. The columns of D'Erlon, repulsed by the English foot, were hurled back in disorder by a charge of the Scots Greys; but the victorious horsemen were crushed in their turn by the French cuirassiers, and the mass of the French cavalry, twelve thousand strong, flung itself in charge after charge on the English front, carrying the English guns and sweeping with desperate bravery round the unbroken squares whose fire thinned their ranks. With almost equal bravery the French columns of the centre again advanced, wrested at last the farm of La Haye Sainte from their opponents, and pushed on vigorously though in vain under Ney against the troops in its rear. Terrible as was the English loss—and many of his regiments were reduced to a mere handful of men—Wellington stubbornly held his ground while the Prussians, advancing, as they promised, from Wavre through deep and miry forest roads, were slowly gathering to his support, disregarding the attack on their rear by which Grouchy strove to hold them back from the field. At half-past four their advanced guard deployed at last from the woods; but the main body was still far behind, and Napoleon was still able to hold his ground against them till their increasing masses forced him to stake all on a desperate effort against the English front. The Imperial Guard—his only reserve, and which had as yet taken no part in the battle—was drawn up at seven in two huge columns of attack. The first, with Ney himself at its head, swept all before it as it mounted the rise beside La Haye Sainte, on which the thin English line still held its ground, and all but touched the English front when its mass, torn by the terrible fire of musketry with which it was received, gave way before a charge from the English Guards. The second, three thousand strong, advanced with the same courage over the slope near Hougomont, only to be shattered and repulsed in the same way. At the moment when these masses, shattered but still unconquered, fell slowly and doggedly back down the fatal rise, the Prussians pushed forward some forty thousand strong on Napoleon's right, their guns swept the road to Charleroi, and Wellington seized the moment for a general advance. From that moment all was lost. Only the Old Guard stood firm in the wreck of the French army; and nothing but night and exhaustion checked the English in their pursuit of the broken masses who hurried from the field. The Prussian horse continued the chase through the night, and only forty thousand Frenchmen with some thirty guns recrossed the Sambre. Napoleon himself fled hurriedly to Paris, and his second abdication was followed by the triumphant entry of the English and Prussian armies into the French capital.

Digitized by Google

# EPILOGUE.

With the victory of Waterloo we reach a time within the memory of some now living, and the opening of a period of our history, the greatest indeed of all in real importance and interest, but perhaps too near to us as yet to admit of a cool and purely historical treatment. In a work such as the present at any rate it will be advisable to limit ourselves from this point to a brief summary of the more noteworthy events which have occurred in our political history since 1815.

**The Peace.**

The peace which closed the great war with Napoleon left Britain feverish and exhausted. Of her conquests at sea she retained only Malta, (whose former possessors, the Knights of St. John, had ceased to exist,) the Dutch colonies of Ceylon and the Cape of Good Hope, the French colony of Mauritius, and a few West India islands. On the other hand the pressure of the heavy taxation and of the debt, which now reached eight hundred millions, was embittered by the general distress of the country. The rapid development of English industry for a time ran ahead of the world's demands; the markets at home and abroad were glutted with unsaleable goods, and mills and manufactories were brought to a standstill. The scarcity caused by a series of bad harvests was intensified by the selfish legislation of the landowners in Parliament. Conscious that the prosperity of English agriculture was merely factitious, and rested on the high price of corn produced by the war, they prohibited by an Act passed in 1815 the introduction of foreign corn till wheat had reached famine prices. Society, too, was disturbed by the great changes of employment consequent on a sudden return to peace after twenty years of war, and by the disbanding of the immense forces employed at sea and on land. The movement against machinery which had been put down in 1812 revived in the formidable riots of the Luddites, and the distress of the rural poor brought about a rapid increase of crime. The steady opposition too of the Administration, in which Lord Castlereagh's influence was now supreme, to any project of political progress created a dangerous irritation which brought to the front men whose demand of a "radical reform" in English institutions won them the name of Radicals, and drove more violent agitators into treasonable disaffection

Digitized by Google

and silly plots. In 1819 the breaking up by military force of a meeting at Manchester, assembled for the purpose of advocating a reform in Parliament, increased the unpopularity of the Government; and a plot of some desperate men with Arthur Thistlewood at their head for the assassination of the whole Ministry, which is known as the Cato-Street Conspiracy (1820), threw light on the violent temper which was springing up among its more extreme opponents. The death of George the Third in 1820, and the accession of his son the Prince Regent as George the Fourth, only added to the general disturbance of men's minds. The new King had long since forsaken his wife and privately charged her with infidelity; his first act on mounting the throne was to renew his accusations against her, and to lay before Parliament a bill for the dissolution of her marriage with him. The public agitation which followed on this step at last forced the Ministry to abandon the bill, but the shame of the royal family and the unpopularity of the King increased the general discontent of the country.

**Canning.**

The real danger to public order, however, lay only in the blind opposition to all political change which confused wise and moderate projects of reform with projects of revolution; and in 1822 the suicide of Lord Castlereagh, who had now become Marquis of Londonderry, and to whom this opposition was mainly due, put an end to the policy of mere resistance. Canning became Foreign Secretary in Castlereagh's place, and with Canning returned the earlier and progressive policy of William Pitt. Abroad, his first act was to break with the "Holy Alliance," as it called itself, which the continental courts had formed after the overthrow of Napoleon for the repression of revolutionary or liberal movements in their kingdoms, and whose despotic policy had driven Naples, Spain, and Portugal in 1820 into revolt. Canning asserted the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of foreign states, a principle he enforced by sending troops in 1826 to defend Portugal from Spanish intervention, while he recognized the revolted colonies of Spain in South America and Mexico as independent states. At home his influence was seen in the new strength gained by the question of Catholic Emancipation, and in the passing of a bill for giving relief to Roman Catholics through the House of Commons in 1825. With the entry of his friend Mr. Huskisson into office in 1823 began a commercial policy which was founded on a conviction of the benefits derived from freedom of trade, and which brought about at a later time the repeal of the Corn Laws. The new drift of public policy produced a division among the Ministers which showed itself openly at Lord Liverpool's death in 1827. Canning became First Lord of the Treasury, but the Duke of Wellington, with the Chancellor, Lord Eldon, and the Home Secretary, Mr. Peel, refused to serve under him; and four months after the formation of Canning's Ministry it was

Digitized by Google

EPILOGUE 1815-1873.

broken up by his death. A temporary Ministry formed under Lord Goderich on Canning's principles was at once weakened by the position of foreign affairs. A revolt of the Greeks against Turkey had now lasted some years in spite of Canning's efforts to bring about peace, and the despatch of an Egyptian expedition with orders to devastate the Morea and carry off its inhabitants as slaves forced England, France, and Russia to interfere. In 1827 their united fleet under Admiral Codrington attacked and destroyed that of Egypt in the bay of Navarino; but the blow at Turkey was disapproved by English opinion, and the Ministry, already wanting in Parliamentary strength, was driven to resign (1828).

**Reform.**

The formation of a purely Tory Ministry by the Duke of Wellington, with Mr. Peel for its principal support in the Commons, was generally looked on as a promise of utter resistance to all further progress. But the state of Ireland, where a "Catholic Association" formed by Daniel O'Connell maintained a growing agitation, had now reached a point when the English Ministry had to choose between concession and civil war. The Duke gave way, and brought in a bill which, like that designed by Pitt, admitted Roman Catholics to Parliament, and to all but a few of the highest posts, civil or military, in the service of the Crown. The passing of this bill in 1829 by the aid of the Whigs threw the Tory party into confusion; while the cry for Parliamentary Reform was suddenly revived with a strength it had never known before by a Revolution in France in 1830, which drove Charles the Tenth from the throne and called his cousin, Louis Philippe, the Duke of Orleans, to reign as a Constitutional King. William the Fourth, who succeeded to the crown on the death of his brother, George the Fourth, at this moment (1830) was favourable to the demand of Reform, but Wellington refused all concession. The refusal drove him from office; and for the first time after twenty years the Whigs saw themselves again in power under the leadership of Earl Grey. A bill for Parliamentary Reform, which took away the right of representation from fifty-six decayed or rotten boroughs, gave the 143 members they returned to counties or large towns which as yet sent no members to Parliament, established a £10 householder qualification for voters in boroughs, and extended the county franchise to leaseholders and copyholders, was laid before Parliament in 1831. On its defeat the Ministry appealed to the country. The new House of Commons at once passed the bill, and so terrible was the agitation produced by its rejection by the Lords, that on its subsequent reintroduction the Peers who opposed it withdrew and suffered it to become law (June 7, 1832). The Reformed Parliament which met in 1833 did much by the violence and inexperience of many of its new members, and especially by the conduct of O'Connell, to produce a feeling of reaction in the country. On the resignation of Lord Grey in 1834 the

Digitized by Google

Ministry was reconstituted under the leadership of Viscount Melbourne; and though this administration was soon dismissed by the King, whose sympathies had now veered round to the Tories, and succeeded for a short time by a Ministry under Sir Robert Peel (Nov. 1834—April 1835), a general election again returned a Whig Parliament, and replaced Lord Melbourne in office. Weakened as it was by the growing change of political feeling throughout the country, no Ministry has ever wrought greater and more beneficial changes than the Whig Ministry under Lord Grey and Lord Melbourne during its ten years of rule from 1831 to 1841. In 1833 the system of slavery which still existed in the British colonies, though the Slave Trade was suppressed, was abolished at a cost of twenty millions; the commercial monopoly of the East India Company was abolished, and the trade to the East thrown open to all merchants. In 1834 the growing evil of pauperism was checked by the enactment of a New Poor Law. In 1835 the Municipal Corporations Act restored to the inhabitants of towns those rights of self-government of which they had been deprived since the fourteenth century. 1836 saw the passing of the General Registration Act, while the constant quarrels over tithe were remedied by the Act for Tithe Commutation, and one of the grievances of Dissenters redressed by a measure which allowed civil marriage. A system of national education, begun in 1834 by a small annual grant towards the erection of schools, was developed in 1839 by the creation of a Committee of the Privy Council for educational purposes and by the steady increase of educational grants.

Peel.

Great however as these measures were, the difficulties of the Whig Ministry grew steadily year by year. Ireland, where O'Connell maintained an incessant agitation for the Repeal of the Union, could only be held down by Coercion Acts. In spite of the impulse given to trade by the system of steam communication which began with the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway in 1830, the country still suffered from distress: and the discontent of the poorer classes gave rise in 1839 to riotous demands for "the People's Charter," including universal suffrage, vote by ballot, annual Parliaments, equal electoral districts, the abolition of all property qualification for members, and payment for their services. In Canada a quarrel between the two districts of Upper and Lower Canada was suffered through mismanagement to grow into a formidable revolt. The vigorous but meddlesome way in which Lord Palmerston, a disciple of Canning, carried out that statesman's foreign policy, supporting Donna Maria as sovereign in Portugal and Isabella as Queen in Spain against claimants of more absolutist tendencies by a Quadruple Alliance with France and the two countries of the Peninsula, and forcing Mehemet Ali, the Pacha of Egypt, to withdraw from an attack on Turkey by the bombardment of Acre in 1840, created general uneasiness; while

Digitized by Google

EPILOGUE. 1815-1873.

the public conscience was wounded by a war with China in 1839 on its refusal to allow the smuggling of opium into its dominions. A more terrible blow was given to the Ministry by events in India; where the occupation of Cabul in 1839 ended two years later in a general revolt of the Affghans and in the loss of a British army in the Khyber Pass. The strength of the Government was restored for a time by the death of William the Fourth in 1837 and the accession of Victoria, the daughter of his brother Edward, Duke of Kent. With the accession of Queen Victoria ended the union of England and Hanover under the same sovereigns, the latter state passing to the next male heir, Ernest, Duke of Cumberland. But the Whig hold on the House of Commons passed steadily away, and a general election in 1841 gave their opponents, who now took the name of Conservatives, a majority of nearly a hundred members. The general confidence in Sir Robert Peel, who was placed at the head of the Ministry which followed that of Lord Melbourne, enabled him to deal vigorously with two of the difficulties which had most hampered his predecessors. The disorder of the public finances was repaired by the repeal of a host of oppressive and useless duties and by the imposition of an Income Tax. In Ireland O'Connell was charged with sedition and convicted, and though subsequently released from prison on appeal to the House of Lords, his influence received a shock from which it never recovered. Peace was made with China by a treaty which threw open some of its ports to traders of all nations; and in India the disaster of Cabul was avenged by an expedition under General Pollock which penetrated victoriously to the capital of that country in 1842. The shock, however, to the English power brought about fresh struggles for supremacy with the natives, and especially with the Sikhs, who were crushed for the time in three great battles at Moodkee, Ferozeshah, and Sobraon (1845 and 1846) and the province of Scinde annexed to the British dominions.

**Free Trade.**

Successful as it proved itself abroad, the Conservative Government encountered unexpected difficulties at home. From the enactment of the Corn Laws in 1815 a dispute had constantly gone on between those who advocated these and similar measures as a protection to native industry and those who, viewing them as simply laying a tax on the consumer for the benefit of the producer, claimed entire freedom of trade with the world. In 1839 an Anti-Corn-Law League had been formed to enforce the views of the advocates of free trade; and it was in great measure the alarm of the farmers and landowners at its action which had induced them to give so vigorous a support to Sir Robert Peel. But though Peel entered office pledged to protective measures, his own mind was slowly veering round to a conviction of their inexpediency; and in 1846 the failure of the potato crop in Ireland and of the harvest in England forced him to introduce a bill for the

Digitized by Google

repeal of the Corn Laws. The bill passed, but the resentment of his own party soon drove him from office; and he was succeeded by a Whig Ministry under Lord John Russell which remained in power till 1852. The first work of this Ministry was to carry out the policy of free trade into every department of British commerce; and from that time to this the maxim of the League, to "buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest," has been accepted as the law of our commercial policy. Other events were few. The general overthrow of the continental monarchs in the Revolution of 1848 found faint echoes in a feeble rising in Ireland under Smith O'Brien which was easily suppressed by a few policemen, and in a demonstration of the Chartists in London which passed off without further disturbance. A fresh war with the Sikhs in 1848 was closed by the victory of Goojerat and the annexation of the Punjaub.

**Russian and Sepoy Wars.**

The long peace which had been maintained between the European powers since the treaties of 1815 was now drawing to a close. In 1852 the Ministry of Lord John Russell was displaced by a short return of the Conservatives to power under Lord Derby; but a union of the Whigs with the Free Trade followers of Sir Robert Peel restored them to office in the beginning of 1853. Lord Aberdeen, the head of the new administration, was at once compelled to resist the attempts of Russia to force on Turkey a humiliating treaty; and in 1854 England allied herself with Louis Napoleon, who had declared himself Emperor of the French, to resist the invasion of the Danubian Principalities by a Russian army. The army was withdrawn; but in September the allied force landed on the shores of the Crimea, and after a victory at the river Alma undertook the siege of Sebastopol. The garrison however soon proved as strong as the besiegers, and as fresh Russian forces reached the Crimea the Allies found themselves besieged in their turn. An attack on the English position at Inkermann on November the 5th was repulsed with the aid of a French division; but winter proved more terrible than the Russian sword, and the English force wasted away with cold or disease. The public indignation at its sufferings forced the Aberdeen Ministry from office in the opening of 1855; and Lord Palmerston became Premier with a Ministry which included those members of the last administration who were held to be most in earnest in the prosecution of the war. After a siege of nearly a year the Allies at last became masters of Sebastopol in September, and Russia, spent with the strife, consented in 1856 to the Peace of Paris. The military reputation of England had fallen low during the struggle, and to this cause the mutiny of the native troops in Bengal, which quickly followed in 1857, may partly be attributed. Russian intrigues, Moslem fanaticism, resentment at the annexation of the kingdom of Oude by Lord Dalhousie, and a fanatical belief on the part of the



Digitized by Google

Hindoos that the English Government had resolved to make them Christians by forcing them to lose their caste, have all been assigned as causes of an outbreak which still remains mysterious. A mutiny at Meerut in May 1857 was followed by the seizure of Delhi where the native king was enthroned as Emperor of Hindostan, by a fresh mutiny and massacre of the Europeans at Cawnpore, by the rising of Oude and the siege of the Residency at Lucknow. The number of English troops in India was small, and for the moment all Eastern and Central Hindostan seemed lost; but Madras, Bombay, and the Punjaub remained untouched, and the English in Bengal and Oude not only held their ground but marched upon Delhi, and in September took the town by storm. Two months later the arrival of reinforcements under Sir Colin Campbell relieved Lucknow, which had been saved till now by the heroic advance of Sir Henry Havelock with a handful of troops, and cleared Oude of the mutineers. The suppression of the revolt was followed by a change in the government of India, which was transferred in 1858 from the Company to the Crown; the Queen being formally proclaimed its sovereign, and the Governor-General becoming her Viceroy.

**Lord Palmerston.**

The credit which Lord Palmerston won during the struggle with Russia and the Sepoys was shaken by his conduct in proposing an alteration in the law respecting conspiracies in 1858, in consequence of an attempt to assassinate Napoleon the Third which was believed to have originated on English ground. The violent language of the French army brought about a movement for the enlistment of a Volunteer force, which soon reached a hundred and fifty thousand men; and so great was the irritation it caused that the bill, which was thought to have been introduced in deference to the demands of France, was rejected by the House of Commons. Lord Derby again became Prime Minister for a few months; but a fresh election in 1859 brought back Lord Palmerston, whose Ministry lasted till his death in 1865. At home his policy was one of pure inaction; and his whole energy was directed to the preservation of English neutrality in five great strifes which distracted not only Europe but the New World, a war between France and Austria in 1859 which ended in the creation of the kingdom of Italy, a civil war in America which began with the secession of the Southern States in 1861 and ended four years later in their subjugation, an insurrection of Poland in 1863, an attack of France upon Mexico, and of Austria and Prussia upon Denmark in 1864. The American war, by its interference with the supply of cotton, reduced Lancashire to distress; while the fitting out of piratical cruisers in English harbours in the name of the Southern Confederation gave America just grounds for an irritation which was only allayed at a far later time. Peace, however, was successfully preserved; and the

Digitized by Google

The New Reformers.

policy of non-intervention was pursued after Lord Palmerston's death by his successor, Lord Russell, who remained neutral during the brief but decisive conflict between Prussia and Austria in 1866 which transferred to the former the headship of Germany.

With Lord Palmerston, however, passed away the policy of political inaction which distinguished his rule. Lord Russell had long striven to bring about a further reform of Parliament; and in 1866 he laid a bill for that purpose before the House of Commons, whose rejection was followed by the resignation of the Ministry. Lord Derby, who again became Prime Minister, with Mr. Disraeli as leader of the House of Commons, found himself however driven to introduce in 1867 a Reform Bill of a far more sweeping character than that which had failed in Lord Russell's hands. By this measure, which passed in August 1867, the borough franchise was extended to all ratepayers, as well as to lodgers occupying rooms of the annual value of £10; the county franchise was reduced to £12, thirty-three members were withdrawn from English boroughs, twenty-five of whom were transferred to English counties, and the rest assigned to Scotland and Ireland. Large numbers of the working classes were thus added to the constituencies; and the indirect effect of this great measure was at once seen in the vigorous policy of the Parliament which assembled after the new elections in 1868. Mr. Disraeli, who had become Prime Minister on the withdrawal of Lord Derby, retired quietly on finding that a Liberal majority of over one hundred members had been returned to the House of Commons; and his place was taken by Mr. Gladstone, at the head of a Ministry which for the first time included every section of the Liberal party. A succession of great measures proved the strength and energy of the new administration. Its first work was with Ireland, whose chronic discontent it endeavoured to remove by the disestablishment and disendowment of the Protestant Church in 1869, and by a Land Bill which established a sort of tenant-right in every part of the country in 1870. The claims of the Nonconformists were met in 1868 by the abolition of compulsory church-rates, and in 1871 by the abolition of all religious tests for admission to offices or degrees in the Universities. Important reforms were undertaken in the management of the navy; and a plan for the entire reorganization of the army was carried into effect after the system of promotion to its command by purchase had been put an end to. In 1870 the question of national education was furthered by a bill which provided for the establishment of School Boards in every district, and for their support by means of local rates. In 1871 a fresh step in Parliamentary reform was made by the passing of a measure which enabled the votes of electors to be given in secret by means of the ballot. The greatness and rapidity of these changes, however, produced so rapid a



Digitized by Google

EPILOGUE. 1815-1873.

reaction in the minds of the constituencies that on the failure of his attempt to pass a bill for organizing the higher education of Ireland. Mr. Gladstone felt himself forced in 1874 to consult public opinion by a dissolution of Parliament; and the return of a Conservative majority of nearly seventy members was necessarily followed by his retirement from office, Mr. Disraeli again becoming First Minister of the Crown.

Digitized by Google

# INDEX.


ABBO of Fleury, in England, 54
Abbot, Archbishop, his intolerance, 453
his iconoclasm, 457
Abelard, his lectures attended by Englishmen, 129
Abercromby, General, his victory; *see* Battles
Abhorrers; *see* Petitioners and Abhorrers
Acts of Parliament; *see* Statutes
Acquitaine, loss of, 226
Acre, defence of; *see* Smith (Sir Sidney)
Addington becomes Prime Minister, 794
Adelard, of Bath, 83
his services to the universities, 127, 128
Adjutators, council of, 548
Alfred; *see* Ælfred
Ælfgar, Earl of Mercia, exile of, 66
Ælfred, comes to the throne, 44
drives back the Danes, 44, 45
makes peace, 45
his objects, 45, 46
his government, 46, 47
his literary work, 47, 48
sayings of, compiled in Henry the Second's time, 114
Ælfred, Edmund Ironside's brother, attacks England, 63
his eyes torn out by Harold, *ib.*
Ælla, a leader of the Jutes, 10
king of Deira, 17
Æthelbald, of Mercia, 35, 36
his repulse from Wessex, 37
Æthelberht, his rule in Kent, 17
his conversion, 18
effect of his death, 20
Æthelburh, wife of Ini, 41
Æthelflaed, Ælfred's daughter, marries Æthelred, 44
lady of Mercia, 50
conquers the five boroughs, 50
fortifies Tamworth and Stafford, 50
Æthelfrith, founds the kingdom of Northumberland, 15
massacres monks of Bangor 15, 16
effect of his victories, 16
effect of his death, 17
Æthelred, king of Mercia, 34
Æthelred, son of Æthelwulf, 43
makes the peace of Nottingham, 44
his death, 44
Æthelred, Alfred's son-in-law, 46
his victories over Danes, 49
Æthelred, the Unready, buys peace from Danes, 57
orders massacre of St. Brice's day, 57
driven from England to Normandy, 58
Æthelstan, conquers West Wales, 51
his victory at Brunanburgh, 51
Æthelthryth, founds abbey of Elv, 32
Æthelwold, his school at Abingdon, 54
bishop of Winchester, 54
Æthelwulf, king of Wessex, 43
struggle with Danes, 43
Agricola, Julius; *see* Britain, Roman conquest of
Aidan, sent to Northumbria as a missionary, 22
his blessing on Oswald, 22, 23
his miracle against Penda, 23
Cuthbert's vision of him, 25
effect of his work, 28
Aix-la-Chapelle, peace of, 726
Albemarle, Stephen of, insurrection in his favour, 86
Albigenses, 143, 144
Alcwine or Alcuin, as an authority, 33
his assistance to Bede, 38
averts war between Offa and Charles, 41
Aldgate, surrendered by Cnihtena-gild, 92
Alexander, First of Russia, allies himself with Napoleon, 799
Alfune builds St. Giles's in twelfth century, 92
Allen driven from Oxford by Elizabeth, 400
Alleyne, author of "Alarm to the Unconverted," 612
his death, 612
Alliance, the Triple; *see* Temple, Sir William
Alva, his appearance in Flanders, 381
the revolt against, 404
America, discovery of, 297
(United States of) rise of, 738—740
attitude of George the Third towards, 752, 753; *see* also Massachusetts, Virginia, Boston, Washington
congress of, in 1775, 754
Declaration of Independence, 756
final recognition of its independence, 762
effect of it, 762, 763
alliance with France, 775
alliance with Napoleon, 802, 803, 807, 808
civil war and its effects, 818
Amiens, mise of; *see* Lewis the Ninth
peace of, 794, 795
Anderida, siege of, 10
Andrewes, bishop, his declaration about James the First, 489
Andredswold, 10
Danish position there, 49
Anglesey, conquered by Eadwine, 16
Anjou, the line of, its character, 94, 95
Anne deserts her father, 666


Digitized by Google

Anne, influence on her of Duchess of Marlborough; *see* Marlborough, Duchess of
recalled by William, 650
her accession and policy, 690, 691
her assent to the Act of Union with Scotland, 697
her Toryism, 698
Anselm, becomes Prior of Bec, 69
his works, 70
made Archbishop of Canterbury, 86
his struggle against William Rufus, 87
his share in the marriage of Henry, 88
his recall by Henry, 88
supports Henry against Robert, 92
his effect on our literature, 113
Archery, English, Edward the First's use of it, 177
Architecture, impulse given to, by the Jews, 83
Arcot, defence of, 734
Argyle, Earl of, his relations with Charles the First, 524
his struggle with Montrose, 540, 541
his reception of Cromwell, 563
his execution, 619
Argyle, Earl of, in James the Second's time, his condemnation, 649
his insurrection, 650
his execution, *ib.*
Arkwright, his invention of spinning-machine, 768
its effects, 805
Arlotta, William the Conqueror's mother, 71
Arlington, Lord, his dislike of France, 623
his part in the Triple Alliance, 624
his share in the Treaty of Dover, 625
his advice about the Test Act, 627
Armada, the Spanish, struggle with, 409—412
a new one threatened by Philip, 430
Armagh, University of, 21
Army plot to free Strafford, 522
Arnold, General, his attack on Canada, 755, 756
Arthur, of Brittany, taken prisoner and murdered by John, 111
Arthur, of England, "dreams of," a romance, 115
his tomb; *see* Glastonbury
romances about, 115
Ascham, his view of the effect of Italian literature on England 391
Ascue, Anne, burnt, 349
Ashley, Lord, opposes the Act of Uniformity, 609
defends Charles's proposal to dispense with it, 611
opposes the Five Mile Act, 622
his dislike of France, and support of Protestantism, 623
his attitude towards Holland, 625; *see* also Cooper, Shaftesbury
Asser, the friend of Alfred, 48
Assize of Clarendon; *see* Clarendon
Assize of Arms, 106
Astley, Sir Jacob, his view of the battle of Stow, 541, 542
Athelney, Alfred at, 45
Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, his removal from his bishopric, 709
Aubrey, his account of Hobbes, 602
Augsburg, peace of, 669
Augustine, mission of, 17
lands in Kent, 17
his work, 18

Bacon, Roger, studied under Rabbis, 83, 133
his story, 133, 135
his "Opus Majus," 135, 136
his death and subsequent fame, 136
why allowed books, 146
his rank as a schoolman, 147
Bacon Francis, his view of the friars, 147
a type of the new literature, 399, 413
his view of ecclesiastical policy, 404
his opinion of the Brownists, 542, 54,
his career, 591, 597
Badbie, John, burnt as a heretic, 259
Bæda, his story of the Frisian slave-dealer, 13
effect of his Latin History, 18
his story of the sparrow, 20
its significance, 27
his career, 36, 37
account of his Ecclesiastical History, 37, 38
his death, 38
his letter to Archbishop Ecgberht, 38, 39
his history translated by Ælfred, 48
rediscovered by Layamon, 117
Bagdad, knowledge brought from, 128
Ball, John, 233, 243, 244
Balliol, John, 182—184
Edward, 207, 209
Baltimore, Lord, colonizes Maryland, 492
Bamborough, Penda's attack on, 23
Bancroft, Archbishop, his suppression of Calvinism, 458
Bangor, massacre of the monks of, 15
Bank of England: *see* Montague
Bannockburn; *see* Battles
Baptists, rise of, 543
Barebones Parliament, 565—567
Barlow made Bishop of St. David's, 345
Baronius, 462
Barons, greater and lesser, 168
their power after the struggle with Henry the Third, 195—197
Barrow, his influence on Newton, 599
Batholomew's Day, St., in 1662, 603; *see* also St. Bartholomew
Bastwick, the Puritan, 512
Battle Abbey, 76, 88
Battles, Aboukir, 794
Aclea, 43
Agincourt, 261, 262
Assandun, 61
Assaye, 796
Athenry, 434
Austerlitz, 797
Aylesford, 8, 9
Badon (Mount), 11
Bannockburn, 206
Barbury Hill, 14
Barnet, 281
Bensington, 40
Blenheim, 693
Borodino, 804
Bouvines, 121, 122
Boyne, 676, 677
Bradford, 32
Brunanburgh, 51

Digitized by Google

Battles—*continued.*
Bunker's Hill, 755
Burford, 36
Buttington, 49
Camperdown, 786
Chalgrove, 533
Charford, 11
Charmouth, 43
Chester, 16, 157
Chippewa, 808
Conquereux, 97
Copenhagen, 795
Corunna, 800
Cressy, 219—221
Culloden, 725, 726
Deorham, 14, 157
Dettingen, 723
Dunbar, 559
Edgehill, 531
Edington, 45
Ellandun, 41
Evesham, 154
Falkirk, 186
Fleurus, 784
Flodden, 372, 373
Fontenoy, 723, 724
Fuentes d'Onoro, 802
Halidon Hill, 209
Hastings; *see* Senlac
Hatfield, 20
Heavensfield, 21
Hengestesdun, 43
Homildon Hill, 372, 373
Inverlochy, 540
Jemappes, 782
Jena, 798
June 21st, 786
Killiecrankie, 670
Kilsyth, 541
La Hogue, 679
Lansdowne Hill, 532
Leipzig, 807
Lewes, 152
Lexington, 755
Malplaquet, 699
Marengo, 787
Marignano, 316
Marston Moor, 535
Maserfeld, 23
Minden, 734
Mortemer, 72
Mortimer's Cross, 278
Mount Badon; *see* Badon (Mount)
Naseby, 540, 541
Navarete, 226
Nechtansmere, 33
Neville's Cross, 221, 372
Newbury, 533
Newtown Butler, 672
Nile, the, 786
Northallerton, 59
Orthez, 807
Otford, 39
Otterburn, 372, 373
Parret, 43
Philiphaugh, 541
Pinkie Clough, 372, 373
Plassey, 734
Poitiers, 222—224
Preston Pans, 725
Battles—*continued.*
Quebec, 737
Quiberon, 735
Ramillies, 695, 696
Rossbach, 732
Salamanca, 804
Saratoga, 757, 758
Secandun, 36
Sedgemoor, 650
Senlac, 75, 76
Sheriffmuir, 706
Shrewsbury, 259
Solway Moor, 372, 373
Somerton, 36
St. Albans, 276—278
Stamford Bridge, 75
Stirling, 185
Stow, 541
St. Vincent, 761, 786
Talavera, 801
Tenchebray, 93
Torres Vedras, 802
Toulon, 784
Toulouse, 807
Towton, 279
Trafalgar, 796, 797
Val-ès-dunes, 71
Valmy, 781
Varaville, 73
Vimiera, 800
Vinegar Hill, 786
Vittoria, 807
Wagram, 801
Wakefield, 278
Wareham, 44
Waterloo, 810, 811
Winwœd, 24
Worcester, 561
Baxter, Richard, his estimate of Cromwell's church appointments, 573
his attitude towards Richard Cromwell, 580
his reputation as a controversialist, 609, 610
his account of the expulsion of the nonconformist clergy, 612
his opposition to the Declaration of Indulgence, 655
Bayeux, Norse language remains at, 68
tapestry of, as an authority, 70
Beaufort, Cardinal, his position at the accession of Henry the Sixth, 267
leads the war party, 274
Beaumont contrasted with Ben Jonson, 428
Bec, Abbey of, founded by Herlouin, 68
Becket; *see* Beket
Bede, the Venerable; *see* Bæda
Bedford, Duke of, in Henry the Sixth's time, effect of his death, 267
his relations with the Duke of Gloucester, 269
Bedford, Lord, in Charles the First's time, proposal of the king to him, 522
Bedford, Duke of, in George the Third's time, his character and policy, 745, 749
Bedloe, his assistance to Oates, 637
Beggars in Elizabeth's reign, 384, 385
Beket, Gilbert, father of the archbishop, 89
Thomas, first English Archbishop of Canterbury since the Conquest, 91

Digitized by Google

Beket—*continued.*
influenced by the Cistercians, 92
his relations with Theobald, 99
his education, 100
invites Henry the Second to England, *ib.*
fights in France, 102
his election to the See of Canterbury, 103
his struggle with Henry, 103—105
his death, 105
Bellarmine, Cardinal, 462
Benedict of Peterborough, 114
Benedict, Biscop, his abbey at Jarrow, 30
his journeys, *ib.*
Benfleet, Danish camp at, 49
Bentham, Jeremy, his creed, 806
Benoît de Saint Maur as an authority, 70
Beornred, set up by Offa in Wessex, 41
Beornwulf, his struggles and death, 41
Bercta, her marriage with Æthelberht, 17
Berkley, Judge, his opinion on Hampden's case, 514
Bernicia, kingdom of, 15, 16
Bertrand de Born leads an insurrection against Richard the First, 109
Berwick, Edward the First's attack on, 184
cause of its peculiar position, 209
pacification of, 516
Bessin, the, ravaged by the French, 73
Beverley, Alfred of, his history, 115
Bigod, Earl, threatened by Henry the Third, 149
Bigod, Earl Roger, opposes Edward the First, 200
Bill of Rights: *see* Statutes
Birinus, a missionary in Wessex, 22
Biscop, Benedict, his career, 28
Bishops, the Seven, trial and acquittal of, 657
its effect, 663; *see* Sancroft, Jefferys, &c.
Black Death, the, its effects, 241, 242
Blake, Admiral, 558, 562, 563, 576
his body taken from the grave, 608
Blanchard, a French patriot, 262
Blood-bond, the, in early England, 3
Blount, Francis, at Edward the Second's deposition, 204
Blucher, General, 810
Boccaccio, opinion held of, in England, 391
Boethius, Consolations of, translated by Ælfred, 48
Bohemia, James the First's policy towards, 474, 475
Bohun, Humfrey de, opposes Edward the First, 200
Boisil, a missionary, 22
Boleyn, Anne, Henry's passion for her, 321, 323
his indecent conduct about her, 329
her coronation, 330
her execution, 348
her influence on the character of Elizabeth, 363
Bolingbroke, Lord, comes into office, 695
dismissed from office, 698
his attacks on the war with France, 699
his treaty of commerce, 703
his intrigues with the Pretender, *ib.*
his policy, 704, 712
Bologna, university of, in the thirteenth century, 128, 131
Boniface, the missionary, 40
Boniface the Eighth (Pope), his claims, 186
his Bull Clericis Laicos, 199
Bonner, Bishop, his character and persecution, 358, 359
his "Six Bibles," 447, 448
Boroughs, representation of, 171—173
rise of, 187—189
Boston, attacks on tea-ships at, 753
Bothwell, his character, 379, 380
Bouvines; *see* Battles; effects of, 122, 123
Boyle invents the air-pump, 599
"Boys," the party so-called, 714
Boyne; *see* Battles
Bradshaw, John, made Judge of High Court, 554
sits in Parliament of 1654, 568
his body taken from the grave, 608
Bretigny, treaty of, 224
Brigham, treaty of, 183
Britain, Roman conquest of, 5
effect of that conquest on, 6
descent of the northern nations on, 6, 7
their conquest of it, 8—12
Britons, their attempted extermination, 9, 10
their later struggles, 13—16
Brittany, conquest of, by Fulc of Anjou, 96
Brittany, duke of, Arthur; *see* Arthur
Brooke, Lord, a leader of the Presbyterians, 526
Brougham, Lord, helps to edit *Edinburgh Review*, 806
Browne, Archbishop, 439
Brownists, the, 459, 542, 543
Bruce, Robert, his claims on Scotland, 182
joins the English, 184
struggles for independence of Scotland, 186
Edward the Second's truce with, 203
further struggles of, 204—207
Bruce, David, 209, 210
Brunswick, Duke of, marches against France, 781
effect of his march, *ib.*; his retreat, 782
Bruno, Elizabeth's discussion with, 366
Bucer, burning of his bones, 361
Buckingham, Duke of, Edward Bohun, his execution, 318
George Villiers the First, James's favour for, 474
James's warning to, 480
Charles the First's defence of, 483
his impeachment, *ib.*
his policy and its effect, 485
his rivalry with Strafford, 504
his death, 487, 488
George Villiers the Second supports the old Presbyterian party, 625
sent to the Tower by Danby, 634
Bungay, his reputation, 147
Bunyan, John, 453, 454
his imprisonment, 613
the "Pilgrim's Progress" and other writings, 613—615
opposition to Declaration of Indulgence, 655
Buonaparte, Napoleon, defeats the English at Toulon, 784
his successes in Italy, 785
invades Egypt, 786
defeated in Syria, 786, 787

Digitized by Google

Buonaparte—*continued.*
crosses the Alps, 787
his intrigues in India, 794
his aims, 795
his tyranny in France, 796
his alliance with Russia, 799
his intrigues in Spain, 799, 800
his conquest of Austria, 801
his alliance with America, 803
his defeat in Russia, 804
his fall, 807
his return, 809
his final overthrow, 810, 811; *see* also Pitt, Wellington, Battles
Buonaparte, Jerome, 799
Buonaparte, Louis, *ib.*
Buonaparte, Joseph, *ib.*
Burbage, his opinion of Shakspere, 427
Burdett, Sir Francis, moves for reform of Parliament, 806
Burgoyne, General, 756, 757
effect of his defeat, 758
Burhred, King of Mercia, 43
Burke, Edmund, point of contact of, with the Methodists, 721
his impeachment of Warren Hastings, 766
his Bill for Economical Reform, 770
his attitude towards the French Revolution, 775, 776
his early career, *ib.*
his political principles, 776, 777
reflections on the French Revolution, 778
his opposition to Pitt and Fox, 778, 779
his "appeal from the new to the old Whigs," 779
his advice to "diffuse terror," 781
spread of his opinions in England, 784, 785
letters on a Regicide Peace, *ib.*
his death, *ib.*
Burleigh, Lord, Elizabeth's choice of, 366
her confidence in him, 374
zeal for Protestant succession, 379
opinion of the extravagance of wine-buyers, 388
Burley, the schoolman, his reputation, 147
Burnet, Bishop, his estimate of Cromwell's rule, 573
of Shaftesbury's temper, 629
of Charles the Second's temper, 642
Burton, the Puritan, 512, 543
Bute, Lord, his character, 742, 743
his fall, 745
Butler, author of "Hudibras," 589

CABAL, the, 639
Cabinet, rise of, 639
the first, 682, 683
Cabot, Sebastian, his discoveries, 297, 490
his father, 490
Cade, Jack, his rising, 275, 276
Cadwallon, king of Wales, his struggle against Northumbria, 20
his death, 21
Cædmon, the first English poet, 18
story of his vision, 26
importance of his poem, 27
Caen sacked by the French, 73
Cæsar, Julius, reveals Britain to Rome, 5
revival of study of his works in thirteenth century, 128
Cairo, convention of, 794
Calais, taking of, by Edward the Third, 221, 222
Calamy helps the Presbyterians, 526
Cambridge, University of, our ignorance of its early history, 127
its reputation for heresy, 343
treatment of, by James the Second, 653
Cameronians, their resistance to the Scotch Act of Union, 697
Campbell: *see* Colin, 818
Campian, a Jesuit leader, 401, 402, 462
Campo Formio, treaty of, 785
Canada, conquest of, 735—737
establishment of its constitution, 779
invasion of, by the United States, 813
later revolts in, 815
Canning, George, his devotion to Pitt, 767
his Ministry, 799
his firmness after Corunna, 800
his opinion about Walcheren Expedition, 801
his eagerness for Catholic Emancipation, 806, 813
his foreign policy, 813
his death, *ib.*
Canterbury, Augustine at, 17, 18
the centre of Latin influence, 18
plundered by the Danes, 42
Scriptorium of, 114
Canterbury Tales, 163, 164, 215—217
Capel, Lord, his execution, 556
Capuchins, the preachers of Catholicism, 462
Carlisle, conquered by Northumbrians, 29
Caroline of Anspach, Queen of George the Second, 712, 713
her death, 713
Carr, James the First's favour to, 474
Carteret, his policy, 722, 723
Cartwright, Thomas, 455, 456
driven from his Professorship, 458, 459
his organization of the Church, 490
growth of his doctrines, 526
Casaubon, his view of English feeling about literature, 449
Castlemaine, Lady, her conversion, 627
Castlereagh, Lord, his incompetence, 801
his opposition to reform, 812
his suicide, 813
Catherine of Arragon, her sympathy with Spain, 318
her appeal to the Pope, 322
*see* also Henry the Eighth
Catherine the Second of Russia, her partitions of Poland, 775
Catholics, Roman, feelings of, towards Elizabeth, 369, 375
their revolts against her, 382—384
their relations with Mary Stuart, 377, 378
decline of their faith, 398
persecution of them, 401
their attitude during the reigns of Elizabeth and James the First, 460—463
Charles the First's policy towards them, 481
excluded from the Parliament (of 1657,) 579
their hopes in Charles the Second's reign, 635
their position in Ireland, 789
struggle for their emancipation, 793, 814

Digitized by Google

Cato Street Conspiracy, 813
Cavendish, family of, rise of, from spoil of monasteries, 342
Cavendish, Lord, helps to lead country party, 627
his support of William the Third, 664
Caxton, William, his career, 289—293
Ceadda; *see* Chad, S.
Cecil, William; *see* Burleigh, Lord
Cecil, Robert, Elizabeth's speech to, 446
effect of his death, 473, 474
Cecil, the Evangelical, 721
Cedd, his visit to Chad, 24
Centwine, King of Wessex, 34
Cenwulf, succeeds Offa in Mercia, 41
Ceolfrid, a scholar of Biscop's, 36
Ceolwulf, King of Northumbria, 36
Ceorl; *see* Churl
Cerdic, chosen King of West Saxons, 11, 12
Ceylon retained by England at Peace of Amiens, 795
Chad, S., his mission to the Mercians, 24
his death, *ib*
Chalcondylas lectures at Oxford, 298
Chancery, court of, in reign of Edward the First, 165
reformed by Cromwell, 573
Charles the Great, his struggle with Offa, 40, 41
Charles the Fifth, the Emperor, Luther's answer to him, 314
his policy towards Henry the Eighth, 318
Charles the Sixth of France, 260
Charles the Tenth of France, his fall, 814
Charles the First of England
the proposal about his marriage, 479—481
his conduct towards the Catholics, 481
his view of Parliaments, 483
his defence of Buckingham, *ib.*: *see* Buckingham, Eliot, Pym, Hampden
his suppression of Parliaments; *see* Parliaments
his financial policy, 500, 501
his obstinacy, 503
attempts to arrest five members, and effect of his attempt, 528, 529
raises standard at Nottingham, 530
his intrigues after Naseby, 546, 547
his trial and death, 554
effect of his death, 555
Charles the Second, his accession, 582
importance of his time, 587, 588
his study of physical science, 598
his vindictive demands, 605, 606
his policy about the Act of Uniformity, 609, 611
his character, 616—619
his feeling about Roman Catholicism, 620
his view of England contrasted with that of James the Second, 621
his relations with Lewis the Fourteenth, 621, 622
Charles Edward, the Young Pretender, his insurrection against George the Second, 724—726
Charter of Henry the First, 87
of London, 89
the Great, 123—125
the Forest, 200
Château Gaillard, its importance to Richard the First, 110, 111
to English history, 112
Chatham, Earl of, effect of Pitt's taking the title, 748
his illness, 748, 749
takes up parliamentary reform, 751
deplores the attack on the Boston tea-ships, 753
his measures for conciliating America, 754, 757
his death, 757
effect of his dying appeal, 757, 758
his plan of parliamentary reform, 770
*see* also Pitt, William, the Elder
Chaucer, his English, 163
his love of English, 212
character and work, 213—217
laughs at pardoners, 229, and abbots, 231
his exceptional position, 287
Caxton's reverence for, 290
Chausselin, French ambassador for Republic, 781
Chester, its situation, 15
Danes driven from, 49
entered by William the Conqueror, 79; *see* also Battles
Chester, Earl of, rebels against Henry the Third, 137
Chesterfield, Lord, 712, 714
his letters, 717
his opinion of state of England at time of Seven Years' War, 727
Chettle, his opinion of Shakspere, 422
Chichester, Bishop of, his relations with De Montfort, 153
Chichester, Sir Arthur, his rule in Ireland, 444
Chillingworth, his denunciations of persecution, 600, 601
China, treaty with, 816
Chippenham, Danes appear at, 47
Chivalry of Froissart, 176
of Edward the First, *ib.* and 177
Christianity, original dislike of, by the Northern nations who came to England, 12
introduction of, into England, 17—26
Chronicle, the English, as an authority, 7, 34, 42
in Ælfred's reign, 48, 49, 59, 78
Church of England founded by Theodore of Tarsus, 29
reformed by William and Lanfranc, 82
representation of, in Parliament, 173, 174
degradation of, in fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, 216
its position from time of Edward the Fourth, to that of Elizabeth, 284, 285
attitude of its leaders towards the New Learning, 304
Erasmus's attitude towards, 307, 308
More's, 314, 315
Thomas Cromwell's, 329
Elizabeth's, 370
Oliver Cromwell's, 573
Church of Ireland; *see* Ireland, Church of
Churchill, John, Sunderland's speech to, 655; *see* Marlborough, Duke of
Churl, his position, 3, 4
Cistercians, revive religious zeal in twelfth century, 91, 92
Clair-sur-Epte, peace of, 67
Clare, Lord, rewarded by William the First with grants of land, 81

Digitized by Google

Clarendon, Constitutions of, 103
assize of, 106
Clarendon, Lord, his view of the state of the country in early part of Charles the First's reign, 593
made Chancellor, 605
his royalism, *ib.*
suggests amendments in Act of Uniformity, 609
his fall, 622
his illegal proclamations, 647; *see* also Hyde
Clarendon, second Lord, 684
succeeded in government of Ireland by Tyrconnell, 693
intrigues with James, 679
Clarkson, Thomas, sympathy of the Methodists with him, 721
Claudius, Emperor; *see* Britain, Roman conquest of
Clement the Fourth, his friendship for Roger Bacon, 135, 136
the Seventh, Catherine's appeal to; *see* Catherine of Arragon
Clifford, Lord, in Henry the Sixth's time, his career, 278
in Charles the Second's time, his share in the treaty of Dover, 625
his advice about suspending payments, 626
Clive, Robert, his rise, 732
his early battles, 734
helps Pitt to a seat in Parliament, 744
his reforms in India, 758
attitude towards him taken by the House of Commons, 759
Closter-Seven, convention of, 727
Pitt's rejection of it, 732
Cnut, comes to the throne, 61
change in his character, *ib.*
his letter from Rome, 62
his laws, 62, 63
his death, 63
Coifi, his argument for Christianity, 20
Coke, Mr., of Norfolk, his large farms, 769
Coke, Sir Edward, his reverence for law, 473
his death, 518
Coleman, his letters about the Popish Plot, 635, 636
Colepepper, his denunciation of monopolists, 502
leaves Parliament after the Hull affair, 531
Colet, Dean, his exceptional position, 298
his teachings, 299, 300
his school, 305
his sermons, 303, 306, 307
Colman, his contest with Wilfrith, 28
Cologne, University of, its relations with Oxford, 146
Columba founds the monastery of Iona, 22
his authority appealed to, 28
Columban, an Irish missionary, 21
effect of his work in England, 22
Columbus discovers the New World, 297
Commines, Philip de, his exceptional position, 297, 298
Commission, Court of High, its effect, 609
Commons, House of, how it was formed, 225
its early timidity, 225, 226
force of its petitions, 226
its struggles with John of Gaunt, 227, 228
its degeneracy under the Lancastrians, 265, 266
Commons, House of—*continued*.
restriction of the right of election to it, 266
its attitude in 1520, 327
its position in Elizabeth's reign, 395—397
in William the Third's reign, 680, 681
its relations with Walpole, 711, 712
its condition in time of elder Pitt, 743, 744
question of its reform, 750, 751, 769, 779, 806, 814, 819; *see* also Pitt, Wilkes, Chatham, Burdett
Commonwealth, the English, 556—563
Commune, rise of, 194
Companies, Livery, 104
Compton, Bishop, his suspension from his office, 653
his support of William's claims, 663, 664
Comyn, John, Edward's vow to avenge his murder, 177
Connecticut; *see* Warwick, Earl of
Conventicle Act, passing of, 611
Convention, the, in 1660
its attitude towards Charles the Second, 605—603
Convocation, silencing of, by Henry the Eighth, 331
it draws up Articles of Religion, 332
Cooper, Ashley, returned to Barebone's Parliament, 565
opposes Richard Cromwell, 581
advises the restoration of the expelled members, 582
made Lord Ashley and Chancellor of Exchequer, 605; *see* Ashley, Lord, Shaftesbury, Lord
Coote, Sir Eyre, 758, 760
Cope, Sir John, in 1745, 724, 725
Copernicus, effect of his discoveries, 297
Cordova, the learning brought from, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, 128
Corn, exportation of, by Britain, 5
Laws, repeal of, 816, 817
Cornewaile, Richard, on reign of Edward the Third, 212
Cornwall, effect on, of victory of Deorham, 16
its exceptional position, 552
Cornwall, Richard, Earl of, rises against Henry the Third, 148
attitude of, in civil wars, *ib.*
is captured at battle of Lewes, 152
Cornwallis, Lord, his defeat in America, 761
his rule in Ireland, 793
Cotentin, conquest of, 68
Cotton, oppression of, 518
Council, the Great, 167—169
(the Royal) Ordinances of, 225
increased power of, under Edward the Fourth, 283
Country Party, the, formation of, 627
Courtenay, bishop and archbishop, his relations with the Lollards, 235, 251, 252
Marquis of Exeter, his insurrection and execution, 339
Covenant, the Scotch, signing of, in 1640, 515, 516
Solemn League and, 532, 534
publicly burnt after Restoration, 608
abolished in Scotland, 619
Coventry, Sir William, helps to lead the Country Party, 627
Coverdale, Miles, revises the translation of the Bible, 332

Digitized by Google

Coverdale—*continued.*
effect of his translation ; *see* England, Literature of
Cowper, William, made Lord Keeper, 695
Craftsmen, rise of, 187
their gilds, 191 - 193
Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex, his dismissal, 480
Cranmer, Thomas, his proposal about the universities, 328
his appointment to Canterbury, 330
crowns Anne Boleyn, *ib.*
pleads for Cromwell, 334
saved from arrest by Henry, 347
in danger after Six Articles Act, 549
becomes a decided Protestant, 350, 351
arrested, 354
his execution, 359, 360
Crimea, invasion of, 818
Crompton, his invention of the "Mule," 768
Cromwell, Thomas, his career, 325—349 ; *see* also Cranmer
Cromwell, Oliver, his words at Dunbar, 448
story of his first attempt to leave England, 499
his second threat of leaving it, 526
wins Marston Moor, 534—536
his early career, 536, 537
organizes the Ironsides, 537—539
his attitude towards the Presbyterians, 545
his part in the discussions between Ireton and the King, 550
his victories against Royalists, 1648-9, 552, 553
suppresses the mutiny of the troops, 557
his wars in Ireland and Scotland, 557—561
his dissolution of the Rump, 563, 564
his Protectorate, 564—580
effect of his death, 581
his body taken from the grave, 608 ; *see* also Battles
Cromwell, Henry, his settlement of Ireland, 572
Cromwell, Richard, peaceable accession of, 580
his reign, 581
Crowland, abbey of, its rise, 31
Cumberland, Earl of, defends Shipton Castle, 338, 339
Customs, English, use of, by William the First, 81
Cuthbert, story of his mission, 24—26
his episcopal rule and death, 32—34
Cuthwulf, King of West-Saxons, 14

DACRE, Lord, insurgent in reign of Henry the Eighth, 338
also in reign of Elizabeth, 383
Dalaber, Anthony, a follower of Tyndale, 343
Dalhousie, Lord, effect of his annexation of Oude, 817
Danby, Lord, made Treasurer, 632
his policy, 633—635
cause of his fall, 637, 638
his impeachment, 640
his support of William, 663—666
compared with Walpole, 712
Danegeld, arranged by Court of Exchequer, 93
Danelagh, conquest of, by Eadward the Elder, 50
Danes, their first invasion of England, 42—44
repulsed by Ælfred, 44, 45
Danes—*continued.*
fresh invasion in reign of Æthelred, 57
massacre of, 57
invasion of Swegen, 57
they slay Archbishop Ælfheah, 57
their conquest of England, 58
their rule, 60—63
fall of their power, 63
they invade England under Swegen, 78
induced to leave England by William, 79
invasion of, resisted by William, 85
Daniel, the poet, 391
Darcy, Lord, insurgent in reign of Henry the Eighth, 338
Darnley ; *see* Mary Stuart
Dartmouth, Lord, interferes with James, 679
David, of Wales, rebellion and death of, 162, 163
Deane, General, his successes, 572
Declaration of Indulgence by Charles the Second, 626
by James the Second, 655, 656
of Rights, 670—672
of Independence, 756
Deira, 15, 16
becomes Yorkshire, 52
Dekker, a successor of Heywood, 425
De la Mare, Peter, 227
Denewulf, Bishop of Winchester, 46
Derby, Earl of, in Victoria's reign, his first ministry, 817
his second ministry, 818
his Reform Bill, 819
Derby, Henry, Earl of, his attitude in Richard's reign, 256 ; *see* Henry the Fourth
Dermot, King of Leinster, 431—433
Desborough, General, resigns his command to Cromwell, 578
Descartes, a contemporary of Bacon, 597
Desmond, Earl of, treatment of, by Henry the Seventh, 435
by Elizabeth, 443
D'Espec, influenced by the Cistercians in the twelfth century, 91, 92
Despensers, the, career of, 202—204
Devonshire, effect on, of victory of Deorham, 16
men of, rise against Normans, 78
De Witt, his utterance about English sailors, 615
his policy towards France, 660
his fall, 660
Digby, Lord, his denunciation of Strafford, 521, 522
Digges, Sir Dudley, his taunt to Buckingham, 483
his imprisonment, 484
Disraeli, Benjamin, his Reform Bill, 819
his different ministries, 819
Domesday Book as an authority, 78
how it was compiled, 82
Dominic, zeal of 144
Dominicans, lectures of, at Oxford, 146
Dorchester, established as the political see of South Britain, 20
Dorsetshire, the men of, rise against the Normans, 78
Douglas, his relations with Bruce, 206—208
Dover secured by William the Conqueror, 676
its resistance to Lewis of France, 126
treaty of, 625

Digitized by Google

Drake, Sir Francis, his early career, 406, 407
his check to the Armada, 409
his final defeat of it, 411
his voyage round the world, 413
Drogheda, massacre of, 587
Dryden, his view of the importance of the Triple Alliance, 604
his account of Shaftesbury, 628, 629
Dudo of Quentin, as an authority, 670
Dumbarton, capture of, 29
Dumouriez, General, his first successes, 781, 792
Dundee, Marquis of, his struggle against William the Third, 670
Duns Scotus, his rank as a schoolman, 147
Dunstan, his early life, 51
Abbot of Glastonbury, 52
Minister of Eadmund, 52
policy of, 53
exiled, 53
Bishop of London and Winchester, 53
Archbishop of Canterbury, 53
Minister of Eadgar, revives monasteries, 54
crowns Eadward the Martyr, 56
death of, 57
importance of his life, 114
Dupleix, founds French empire in India, 726
his career, 732—734
Durham, Bishop of, at battle of Falkirk, 186
Durrow, University at, 21
Dykvelt, his work for William of Orange in England, 663

Eadberht, king of Northumbria, 39
Pippin's friendship for him, 40
Eadgar, King, 53
his laws, 54
the Ætheling, placed on the English throne, 77
submits to the Conqueror, *ib.*
joins the Danes, 78
takes refuge in Scotland, 79
establishes a king there, 87
Eadmer, his life of Anselm, 114
Eadmund, King of East Anglia, murder of, 44
Eadmund Ironside, his struggles and death, 61
Eadric of Mercia, murder of, by Cnut, 61
Eadward the Elder, 50
his conquests, *ib.*
chosen king by the Scots, 180
Eadward the Martyr, crowned by Dunstan, 56
murdered, *ib.*
the Confessor, made king, 64
his favour to the Normans, 65
struggle with Godwine, *ib*
his death, 66
story of his promise to Duke William, 74
Eadwig the Fair, his marriage, 53
banishes Dunstan, *ib.*
revolts against him, *ib.*
Eadmund Ironsides' brother, murdered by Cnut, 61
Eadwine, an exile from Northumbria, 17
comes to the Northumbrian throne, 18, 19
his reign and death, 20
of Mercia, supports Eadgar the Ætheling, 77
submits to William, 78
Ealdhelm, Bishop, his songs, 47
Ealdormen, 4
Ealdred, Archbishop of York, crowns William the Conqueror, 77
Ealhred of Northumbria, his appeal to Charles the Great, 40
Ealhstan, bishop of Sherburne, 43
Eardwulf, King of Northumbria, received when an exile by Charles the Great, 40
East Anglia, conquered by the Jutes, 17
becomes Christian, 13
conquered by Mercia, 40
rebels against Mercia, 41
landing of the Danes there, 43
Earldom of, created by Cnut, 61; *see* also Eadmund, Rædwald
East Saxons; *see* Essex, Saxons
their settlement, 13, 14
conquered by Northumbria, 19
heathendom of their kings, 20
Ebbs-fleet, first landing-place of English in Britain, 7
of Augustine, 17
Ecclesiastical Commission, 457, 458
Ecgberht, Archbishop of York, Bæda's letter to, 38, 39
Ecgberht, King of Wessex, 41
his conquests, 41, 42
becomes king of the English, *ib.*
his work undone by the Danes, 44
Ecgfrith, his relations with his wife, 32
his rule of Northumbria, *ib.*
his defeat, and death, 33
effect of his death, 34
his conquest of Scotland, 179
Ecgwine, Bishop of Worcester, his preaching, 31
Edinburgh, its foundation, 19
becomes capital of the Scotch kings, 53
Edinburgh Review started, 806
Edmund; *see* Eadmund
Edmundsbury, St., 44
"Jews' Houses" at, 83
growth of, 90, 91
Edward; for the pre-Norman kings, *see* Eadward
Edward, son of Margaret, made King of Scotland, 87
Edward the First of England, his youth, 161
his conquest of Wales, 160—163
his relations to modern England, 163
to Parliaments, 164
his judicial reforms, 164, 165
his legislation, 166, 171
his Parliaments, 171—175
his personal character, 175—177
his relations with Scotland, 178
his conception of kingship, 195
his treatment of the Jews and the clergy, 198, 199
his death, 200
Edward the Second, his relations with the Barons, 200, 201
his truce with Bruce, 203
his vices and fall, *ib.*
Edward the Third, his election, 204
his arrest of Mortimer, 208
progress during his reign, 212—214
effect of his accession, 217, 218
his relations with Flanders and France, 217—224
with Parliament, 224—228

Digitized by Google

Edward the Black Prince, his share in the struggles against John of Gaunt, 226, 227
Edward the Fourth, his election, 279
his marriage, deposition, and restoration, 280—282
his position as a king, 283—287
his character, 286
Edward the Fifth, 293
Edward the Sixth, 351—354
Egypt; *see* Buonaparte
evacuation of, its effects, 795
Eleanor, wife of De Montfort, 148
wife of Edward the First, 162, 176
Elfege, importance of his life, 114
Eliot, Sir John, his first election, 471
his position in the early struggle against Charles the First, 482
his attacks on Buckingham, 483, 484
his arrest, *ib.*
moves the Short Remonstrance, 487
his opinion of Buckingham, 488
his work the source of the Grand Remonstrance, 489
Elizabeth, Queen, state of England at her accession, 362
her appearance and character, 362—367
her policy, 368—371
effect of her policy; *see* England
her ecclesiastical policy, 400, 401
her last days, 445, 446
her "tuning the pulpits," 449
immorality of her court, 473
Ely, Abbey of, founded, 32
burnt by Danes, 44
England, Old, its origin, 1, 2
character of its inhabitants and laws, 2—5
England, Literature of, how affected by Ælfred, 48
poverty of, under Harold, 66
how it explains the position of the country in time of John, 113
between Chaucer and Caxton, 287—289
its revival under Elizabeth, 390—393
effect of Tyndale and Coverdale on, 447, 448
England, Church of; *see* Church of England
language of, progress of, in time of Edward the Third, 212
England, New, its position after war between United States and England, 808
Eorl, in Early England, 3, 4
Episcopacy; *see* Pym, Hampden
Erasmus, his visit to England, 299—301
his "Praise of Folly," 301
Essex, first colonization of, by English, 14
Essex, Earl of, Elizabeth's favour to, 366
his insurrection, 426
his failure in Ireland, 444
Essex, Earl of, in Long Parliament, appointed leader of Parliamentary forces, 530
his policy, 531, 533
raises siege of Gloucester, 533
Essex, Earl of, in Charles the Second's time, takes office, 638
his policy, 641, 643
his death, 646
Ethelweard, his exceptional position in our literature, 113
Eugene of Savoy, his success at Cremona, 693
his union with Marlborough, 693, 694
Euphuism, discussed by Elizabeth, 366
protest of Marlowe against it, 421
gives way before Puritanism, 427; *see* also Lyly
Eustace of Boulogne, his strife with burghers of Dover, 65
his aid sought by men of Kent against Normans, 78
Eustace "the Monk," 127
Evesham, origin of, 31
battle of; *see* Battles
Examiner, the, written by Bolingbroke, 697
Exchequer, Court of, its work under Henry the First, 93
Excise Bill, 710, 711
Exclusion Bill, 632
Exeter, siege of, by the Danes, 44, 45
takes active part against the Normans, 78
besieged by the English, 78
relieved by Fitz-Osbern, 79
welcomes the Barons, 123

FABYAN, his Chronicle, 283
Fagius, burning of his bones, 361
Fairfax, General, his first appointment by Parliament, 531
effect on him of the king's treason, 552
raises the cry of a free Parliament, 582
Falkirk, battle of; *see* Battles
Falkland, Lord, his character, 525
his views on Church Reform, 526
leaves Parliament after the refusal of Hotham, 530
his death, 533
his theology, 591
Farmer-class, rise of, 239
Fastolf, Sir John, his patronage of Caxton, 292
Fawkes, de Breauté, his rebellion, 138
Guy; *see* Gunpowder Plot
Ferrars, Bishop of St. David's, execution of, 359
Feudalism, introduced by William the First, 80
effect of, on England, 81, 82
relation of universities to, 131, 132
ruined by Wars of Roses, 283
Edward's relations to, 197—199
Finch, Chief-Justice, his opinion on Hampden's case, 514
his flight, 521
Fisher, Bishop, his favour to Erasmus, 908
his answer to Luther, 916
Fitz-Neal, his book on the Exchequer, 114
Fitz-Osbern, Roger, rebels against William, 84
Fitz-Osbern, William, is left in charge of England by William the First, 77
relieves Exeter, 79
receives grant of manors, 81
Fitz-Osbert; *see* William Longbeard
Fitz-Ralf, Archbishop, his attack on Friars, 231
Fitz-Thomas, chosen mayor, 194
Fitzurse; *see* Beket, death of
Fitz-Walter, Captain of the City of London, 90
Marshal of the Army of God and the Holy Church, 123
taken prisoner, 126

Digitized by Google

Fitz-Warren, Fulk, drives Martin from England, 142
Fitz-William family, rise of, from spoil of monasteries, 342
Five Mile Act, 611, 612
Flamsteed, the astronomer, 599
Flanders, relations of Edward the Third to, 218, 219
Caxton educated in, 289
importance of its trade to England, 381
Fleetwood, resigns his command to Cromwell, 578
remonstrates against the dissolution of 1657, 579
his conduct during the second Protectorate, 582
Fletcher, contrasted with Ben Jonson, 428
Flood, Henry, his support of Irish independence, 789
Florence, of Worcester, as an authority, 49, 59, 78
Florence, poets of, 133, 143
her relation to letters in the sixteenth century, 298
Folk, greater and lesser, in towns, 193, 194
Fontainebleau, treaty of, 793
Ford contrasted with Ben Jonson, 428
Forest laws, the, enacted by Cnut, 62
Fortescue, Sir John, his doctrine about English monarchy, 283; *see* also 297
Foxe, John, his "Book of Martyrs," 309
Fox, Bishop, his favour to Erasmus, 308
his favour to Wolsey, 316
Fox, George, his prophecy of Cromwell's death, 580
Fox, Charles James, his opinion of Pitt, 763
his coalition with Lord North, 764
his India Bill, 764
his policy towards France, 767
his enthusiasm at fall of Bastille, 774
his intrigues about the Regency, 774
his opinion of Burke, 776
his Libel Act, 779
his support of France, 783
George the Third's dislike of, 796
his ministry, 798
his death, 798
France, early history of; *see* Lewis the Ninth, Edward the Third, Henry the Fifth, Joan of Arc, Lewis the Fourteenth, Lewis the Fifteenth, Voltaire, Rousseau
States-General in, 774
fall of the Bastille in, 774
attitude of English statesmen towards; *see* Pitt, Fox, Burke
declares war against Austria, 781
declares war on England, 782
character of its government during Revolution, 781
war with England; *see* Pitt; *see* also Buonaparte, Wellington
Francis, of Assisi, his life, 144
Francis the First of France, Henry the Eighth's friendship for, 316
his interference with the University of Paris, 328
Franklin, Benjamin, Whitfield's effect on, 718
Franks, relations of, with England, 40, 41
Frederick, Prince of Wales, son of George the Second, 713
Frederic the Second, Emperor, how regarded in Europe, 133
Frederick the Second of Prussia, seizes Silesia, 715
his second war, 723
his Seven Years' War, 727
his opinion of Pitt, 728
Pitt's assistance to him, 740
Pitt's opinion of him, 731
his despair at Pitt's fall, 742
his administrative reform, 773
Freeman, the, sinks into the villein, 55
French influences on Edward the First, 176—178
Friars, effect on English universities, 133, 146, 147
work of, in towns, 145, 146
their struggle against learning, 146
position in the Barons' war, 147
attacked by Fitz-Ralf and Wyclif, 231
Frisia, Boniface in, 37
Frisian, the story told of, by Bede, 13
Frith Gilds, 189, 190
Frobisher, Elizabeth's favour to, 366
his discoveries, 491
Froissart, his view of chivalry; *see* Chivalry
his picture of Edward at Poitiers, 222—204
Fulc, the Red, second Count of Anjou, 95
the Good, third Count, *ib.*
the Black, his cruelty, 95, 96
of Jerusalem, 97

Gage, General, made governor of Massachusetts, 755
Galileo, a contemporary of Bacon, 597
Gall, St., 17
Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, 348
Garnet the Jesuit, 463
Gauden, Dr., writes the "Eikon Basilike," 556
Gaunt, Elizabeth, executed, 651
Gaunt, John of, invades France, 226
leads the Barons, 227
despises the Commons, 227
relations of, with Wyclif, 231
flies from insurgents, in 1381, 245
his claim on the Spanish crown, 254
Gaveston, Piers, his character and career, 201, 202.
Gay, his opinion of politicians, 742
Geoffrey, Martel, Count of Anjou, 72
his death, 73
compared with his father, 97
Geoffrey Grey-gown, his loss of power, 95
of Anjou, how treated by his father, 96
of Monmouth, his history, 115, 161
George the First, his position contrasted with that of William and Mary and of Anne, 673
results of his accession, 704
George the Second, his hatred of Walpole, 712
guided by his wife, 712
supports Carteret, 723
George the Third, effects of his rule, 740, 741
his character and policy, 741, 742
his treatment of the House of Commons, 744
his despotic rule, 749
his opposition to Catholic Emancipation, 794
his death, 813

Digitized by Google

George the Fourth, accession of, 813
his attack on his wife, 813
Gerald de Barri, his position in literature, 116
his work, 116, 117
Geraldines, the, in Ireland, 435, 436
Gifford, Bonaventure, a Roman Catholic, President of Magdalene College, 654
Gilds, 189—193
Gildas, his account of the state of Britain, 11
Ginkell, General, 677
Girondins, their aim, 780
Gladstone, Mr., his ministry, 819
Glanvill, Ranulf de, takes the King of Scotland prisoner, 106
his treatise on law, 114
Glastonbury monastery, founded by Ini, 35
Dunstan born at, 51
Dunstan, Abbot of, 52
Arthur's tomb at, 115
Glencoe, massacre of, 670
Glendower, Owen, his rising, 259
Gloucester, Earl of, Gilbert de Clare, his relations with the Barons' party, 150, 153, 154.
Gloucester, Duke of, uncle of Richard the Second, 254
Gloucester, Duke Humphrey, his regency, 269
his relations with Jacqueline of Brabant, 269
his death, 274
his seizure of the books at the Louvre, 292
Gloucester, Richard, Duke of; *see* Richard the Third.
Goderich, Lord, forms a ministry on Canning's principles, 813
Godolphin, his rise, 690, 691
his fall, 700
Godwine, his rise, 63
Earl of Wessex, 63
his ability and policy, 64
his wise rule, 64
his struggle with Eadward, 65
his exile, 65
his return and death, 65
Gondomar, 477, 478
Goodman, Bishop, dies a papist, 496
Gower, his position as a poet, 287
Grattan, Henry, his opposition to Pitt's financial policy, 771
his support of Irish independence, 791
Greene, 420, 422, 423
Greenvil, a leader of Cornish Royalists, 532
Greenway the Jesuit, 463
Gregory the Great, his interview with the English slaves, 17
sends Augustine to England, 17
his pastorals translated by Ælfred, 48
Gregory the Seventh, his struggle with William the First, 82
Grenville, why he lost America, 739
his dislike of Pitt, 745
comes into office, 745, 746
his prosecution of Wilkes, 746
Grenville, Lord, his opinion of state of England, 784
refuses to take office without Fox, 796
comes into office, 798
dislikes slave trade, 798, 799
driven from office, 799
Grey, Lady Jane, her marriage, 354
her reign, 354
her death, 355, 356
Grey, Lord, his Reform Bill, 814
his other reforms, 815
Grimbald, Ælfred's employment of, 48
Grindecobbe, 245, 247
Grocyn, fellow of New College, 298—301
Grosseteste, his advice to Bacon, 135
dies at feud with Rome, 143.
his Constitutions, 144
his correspondence with De Montfort, 149
Grotius, his account of English theology, 449
Grow, helps to found vegetable physiology, 599
Gunpowder Plot, 463, 464
Gurdon, Adam, Edward the First's struggle with, 179
Guthlac, Abbot of Crowland, 31, 32
Guthrum, the Dane, becomes King of East Anglia, 44
Ælfred makes peace with, 45
Guy, of Amiens, his poem as an authority, 70
Gwalchmai, his song, 159
Gwyn, Nell, Charles the Second's request to James about, 649
Gyrth, son of Godwine, killed at battle of Senlac, 76

Habeas Corpus Act; *see* Statutes
Hale, Sir Matthew, appointed to reform the law, 561, 566
introduces a bill for Church Comprehension, 608
Hales, a Latitudinarian, 464, 600, 601
Hales, Sir Edward, 652
Halifax, Lord, on Monmouth's succession, 641
on Exclusion Bill, 643
on Limitation Bill, 645
advice to Charles after passing H. C. Act. 648
his dismissal, 652
presents crown to William the Third, 668
Hall, Bishop, his satires, 511
Hallam, his opinion of Shakspere, 426
of the law of conspiracy, 522
of Charles the Second's position, 647
Halley, investigates tides, &c., 599
Hamilton, Marquis of, as Royal Commissioner in Scotland, 516
Hamilton, Duke of, rallies the Royalists against Argyle, 551, 552
execution of, 556
Hampden, his attitude towards Episcopacy, 454, 455
his refusal of the forced loan, 485
his refusal to pay ship-money, 513
his trial, 514, 515
his tact in hindering a fight in the Commons, 526
his death, 533
Harding, character of his Chronicles, 288
Hardy, trial of, 785
Hargreaves, his invention of spinning-jenny, 768
Harley, Robert, comes into office, 695
dismissed from office, 698
his patronage of Mrs. Masham, 700
his return to office, 700

Digitized by Google

Harley—*cont.*
his intrigues with the Pretender, 703
their effects, 704
Harold, King, Cnut's son, 63
Harold, son of Godwine, Earl of East Anglia, 65
his statesmanship, 66
his campaign in Wales, 66
his accession, 66
his oath to Duke William, 74
his preparations for the struggle with William, 75
defeats Harold Hardrada at Stamford Bridge, 75
his death in battle of Senlac, 76
effect of his victories in Wales, 158
Harold Hardrada, King of Norway, invades England, 75
is defeated at Stamford Bridge, 75
Harrison, General, his share in dissolution of the Rump, 563, 594
his execution, 606
Harvey, his opinion of Bacon, 595
his discovery, 597
Haselrig, attempted arrest of, 527
accused of corruption, 561
opposition of, to dissolution of Parliament in favour of Council of State, 563
returned to the Parliament of 1654, 568
his attitude in it, 569
excluded from the Parliament of 1657, 577
demands the dismissal of Fleetwood and Lambert, 581
Hastings; *see* Battles
Hastings, Danish leader, 49
Hastings, Warren, good side of his policy, 759, 760
severe side, 760, 761
his impeachment, 765, 766
its effect, 766
attitude of Pitt towards him, 766, 767
effect of his trial, 792
Hastings, Lord, his death, 293
Harthacnut, King, 63
his crimes and lawlessness, 63
Havelock, Sir Henry, 818
Heahmund, Bishop of Sherborne, 44
Hengest, lands in Kent, 7
his death, *ib.*
Henry of Huntingdon, as an authority, 33
Henry of Blois, as papal legate, 99
Henry the First of England, makes terms with clergy, 87
seizes the crown, 87
his relations to the English, 87
his character, 87
his marriage, 87
his simony, 91
his invasion of Normandy, 92, 93
Henry the Second of England, his character, 101, 102
his policy, 102
his struggle with Beket, 103—105
his legal reforms, 103, 105—108
his death, 108
his treatment of Ireland, 431—433
Henry the Third of England, his coronation, 126
rise of universities in his time, 127
his relations with Hubert de Burgh, 139
refuses justice to Londoners, 140
Henry the Third—*cont.*
his quarrel with the Earl Mareschal, 141
his alliance with the Pope, 142
Henry the Fourth of France, his energy, 462
his conversion, *ib.*
his opinion of James the First, 465
good effects of his policy, 657
Henry the Fourth of England, his insurrection against Richard the Second, 256, 257
his accession, 257
his policy towards the Church, 258, 259
his struggle in Wales, 259
his death, 260
Henry the Fifth, his persecution of the Lollards, 263
his conquest of France, 263—264
effect of his death, 267
Henry the Sixth, effect of his long minority, 265
restrictive act passed under; *see* Commons, House of
his illness and recovery, 276—277
causes of his fall, 277, 278
his restoration, 281
his death, 282
Henry the Seventh, his position as a sovereign, 295, 296
his foreign policy, 302; *see* also Ireland
Henry the Eighth, his accession, 301
his marriage, 302
his foreign policy, 302, 303
his sympathy with Colet, 307
his favour to More, 310
his despotic policy, 314—319; *see* also Ireland
his book against Luther, 315
circumstances of his divorce, 321—323
Wolsey's view of his character, 324
his claim to be head of the Church, 329
his view about the translation of the Bible, 332
his relations with Cromwell, 334
his later career, 349, 350
effect of his character on Elizabeth, 363
Herbert, Lord, in Parliament of 1654, 569
Herbert Wake-dog, Count of Touraine, 97
Herbert, George, as a clergyman, 399
Herbert, Lord, of Cherbury, a friend of Hobbes 602
Herford, Nicholas, a follower of Wyclif, 233
Herluin of Brienne, founds Abbey of Bec, 68
Hexham, priors of, historians of Stephen's reign, 113, 114
Heywood, a successor of Shakspere, 425
High Court of Commission; *see* Commission, High Court of
Hild, founds Whitby monastery, 26
Hobbes, Thomas, his first works on Government, 591
his career and works, 602—604
Hoby, Sir Edward, his complaint, 397
Holland, indignation in, at Charles the First's death, 555
war with, after Restoration, 615, 616
hatred of Lewis the Fourteenth for, 624
remonstrance of Lewis the Fourteenth with, 626, 627
alliance of, with England on behalf of Turkey, 775
absorbed by French Republic, 794
Holland, Lord, execution of, 557



Digitized by Google

Holles, attempted arrest of, 527
his leadership of the Presbyterians, 547
his expulsion from Parliament, 549
Hooke improves the microscope, 599
Hooker, Richard, as a clergyman, 399
as a writer, 413
his ecclesiastical polity, 456, 457
Hooper, execution of, 359
Hopton, Sir Ralph, a Royalist leader, 532
Horsa, coming of, 7
death of, 9
Horne Tooke, his trial, 785
Horner helps to edit "Edinburgh Review," 806
Horsted, its historical importance, 9
Hotham, Sir John, his refusal to admit the king to Hull, 530
Hotspur; *see* Northumberland
Hough, President of Magdalen College, 654
Hounslow, James's camp at, 652
Howard, Admiral Lord, 410
Howard, Lord, in Charles the First's time, presents petition for peace with Scotland, 517
Howard, John, 721, 722
Howe, John, 609
refuses Declaration of Indulgence, 655
Howe, General, 755, 756, 757
Howel Dhu, laws of, 158
Hubert, Walter, effect of his death, 119
his execution of William Longbeard, 194
Hubert de Burgh, resists Lewis of France, 126
his character as a ruler, 137
opposes the Earl of Chester, 137, 138
his fall, 138, 139
Huguenots, relations of Elizabeth of England to, 406, 407
Huskisson, 813
Hussey, Lord, his view of affairs in Henry the Eighth's reign, 337
his execution, 338
Hutchinson, Colonel, account of him by his wife, 449—451
Mrs., her denunciation of James's court, 473
Hyde, Edward, brings in a bill for making Long Parliament perpetual, 524
joins the Royalist cause, 525
issues State Papers for the king, 529
leaves Parliament after the resistance of Hotham to Charles, 530; *see* Clarendon
defeats Hales's bill for Church Comprehension, 608

INDEPENDENTS, their assertion of freedom of belief, 610
India, French empire in, 726
conquest of, by England; *see* Clive
reforms in; *see* Clive
Regulation Act; *see* Statutes; *see* also Hastings (Warren) and Burke (Edmund)
bills for government of; *see* Fox, Pitt (William the younger), Tippoo Sahib, Wellesley, Battles
saved by Convention of Cairo, 795
effect of Affghan war upon, 816
the mutiny and its results, 817, 818
Ingulf of Croyland, his work a forgery, 78
Ini, King of Wessex, 34. 35
Innocent the Third, his position, 119
his relations with John, 120
Innocent the Third—*cont.*
his suspension of Langton, 125
Iona, monastery of, founded by Columba 22
receives the exiles from St. Aidan's, 28
Ireland, revolts in, their effect on Spenser's life, 417
circumstances of its conquest in the twelfth century, 431—433
struggles there, after the conquest by Strongbow, 434, 435
treatment of, by Henry the Seventh and Eighth, 435—437
effect of the Reformation in, 438—440
of the Catholic reaction, 440—443
conquest of, by Elizabeth, 443—445
treatment of, by Strafford; *see* Wentworth
Charles the First appeals to, against England, 534—536
Cromwell's conquest of; *see* Cromwell, Drogheda, Wexford
effect on, of Charles the Second's policy 619
William's conquest of, 677
its soldiers, attempt of James the Second to enrol them in his army, 665
asserts its independence in 1782, 761
England's difficulty in Pitt's time, 771
rising in, in 1798, 786
its position under the Georges, 787, 788
its state during the time of independence 789, 790
union of, with England; *see* Pitt; *see* also Grattan, Flood
Church of, 21, 22
its relation to the English Church, 22
effect on, of the Synod of Whitby, 28, 29
Ireton, General, inclines to the Independents 546
his attitude towards the king, 549, 550
his share in the conquest of Ireland, 572
his body taken from the grave, 608
Ironsides, their effect on the army, 547—549; *see* also Cromwell
Isidore, Bishop, extracts of Bede from, 38
Italy, rise of, 818

JACQUELINE of Brabant; *see* Gloucester, Duke Humphrey
Jacobins led at first by the Girondins, 780
their subsequent success and crimes, 783
their fall, 784
Jacobites, the, their plots against William the Third, 687
against Anne, 697
decline of their power under George the First, 704
their insurrection in 1715, 706, 707
intrigued with by Cardinal Alberoni, 707
Jaenberht, Archbishop, his plot, 40
James the First, his view of divine right of kings, 464—466
of bishops, 466
his relations to Parliament, 467—472, 478
to the judges, 472, 473
to his favourites, 474
to Europe, 474—476
to Bacon, 593
James the Second, when Duke of York, made Lord Admiral 605; *see* York, James Duke of

Digitized by Google

James the Second—*continued.*
popular opinion of his character, 643
servility of his first Parliament, *ib.*
his approval of cruelties after Sedgmoor, 650, 651
his relations with Lewis the Fourteenth, 651
fills his army with Roman Catholic officers, 652
his attacks on the Church, 652, 653
his struggle with the bishops, 656–658
his flight and deposition, 666–668
James, William, a Lollard, 225
Jarrow, the monk of; *see* Bæda
Jeffrey, edits *Edinburgh Review*, 806
Jeffreys, Judge, his "Bloody Circuit," 650, 651
his advice about the Seven Bishops, 656
Jenkins, his ear, 713
Jesuits, their success in England, 401; *see* Campian and Parsons
Jews, their relations with William the First, 83
their position in England at the Conquest, *ib.*
persecutions of, 178
banished by Edward the First, 199
restored by Cromwell, 573
Joan of Arc, career of, 263–273
Jocelyn, Bishop of Wells under John, 91
John, the old Saxon, 43
John, King of England, his conspiracy against Henry the Second, 108
his treachery to Richard, 109
his character and policy, 118, 119
his attitude towards the Pope, 119, 120
his attitude towards the nobles, 120, 121
his reception of the demands of the nobles, 123
his attitude after Magna Charta, 125
his death, 126
his treatment of Ireland, 433, 434
Johnson, Samuel, a friend of Burke's, 775
Johnston of Warriston suggests the renewal of the Covenant, 515
Jonson, Ben, his account of Spenser's death, 417
his view of Shakspere's character, 422
of his readiness in writing, *ib.*
"Every Man in his Humour," 424
succeeds Shakspere as king of the stage, 428
his estimate of Bacon, 593, 594
friendship for Hobbes, 602
Joseph the Second of Austria, motive and character of his policy, 763
his death, 775
Justiciar, appointment of, 93
Junto, the Whig, 682
Junius, prosecution of, 746
his letters, 750
Jutes, their position in England, 1, 2
their invasion of England, 7
their Kentish kingdom; *see* Kent
Juxon, Bishop, made Treasurer, 496

KEBEL, execution of, 91
Kent, rise of kingdom of, 17
struggles with Northumbria, *ib.*
insurrection of, against Mercia, 40
Kent—*continued.*
subjection of, to Wessex, 41, 42
revolts against Odo of Bayeux, 78
Kent, Earl of, his execution, 208
Kepler, a contemporary of Bacon, 597
Killiecrankie, battle of, 670
Killigrew, his rebuke to Charles the Second, 670
Kingship, English, change in its character, 55
Knolles, his history of the Turks, 311
Knollys, his opinion of Mary Stuart, 376
Knox, his resistance to Mary, 370

LALLY-TOLENDAL, General, in India, 733
Labourers, Statutes of; *see* Peasantry
Lally, General, his defeat, 758
Lambert, General, employed by Fairfax, 551, 552
resigns his commission to Cromwell, 578
his conduct after Cromwell's death, 592
excepted from the general pardon, 600
Lambeth, treaty of, 127
Lancaster, Thomas, Earl of, his relations with Gaveston, 201, 202
his defeat and death, 202, 203
Lancaster, Duke of; *see* Gaunt, John of
Lancaster, House of; *see* Henry the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth
Land, tenure of, by Norman barons after Conquest, 81
Lanfranc, of Pavia, enters the Abbey of Bec, 68
opposes William, 73
banished from Normandy, *ib.*
becomes William's chief adviser, 74
summoned to England, 82
his reforms; *see* Church of England
assists Rufus to gain the crown, 85
effect of his death, 86
Langton, Stephen, 119, 120, 123
his suspension from his archbishopric, 125
his attitude in Henry the Third's reign, 137, 138
Langton, Simon, his advice to the Barons, 126
Langton, Walter, Bishop of Worcester, 304
Latimer, Lord, removed from office, 228
Latimer, Hugh, studies at Padua, 304
his autobiography, 320, 343
his preaching, 344
his first arrest, 344
made Bishop of Worcester, 345
his treatment of a figure of the Virgin, 345, 346
imprisoned and deposed, 347
arrested under Six Articles Act, 349
imprisoned on Mary's accession, 354
his execution, 359
Latitudinarians, growth of, 599—602
Laud, his intolerance, 458
his list of ministers, 481
his character and policy, 494—498
his treatment of Scotland, 507—510
his feelings about "Thorough," 513
his courage, 514
imprisonment of, 521
check on his power, 609
Lauderdale, Lord, his rule in Scotland, 619
Lauzun, his taunt against the Irish defenders of Limerick, 677
Law, Roman, its influences in Edward the First's reign, 177



Digitized by Google

Laws, the, as an authority, 49, 59
Layamon, his poem, 117
Legh, commissioner about the monasteries, 333
Leicester, Earl of; *see* Montfort, Simon de
Leicester, Earl of, Elizabeth's favourite, 363, 367
Leighton the Puritan, 512
Lennox, Duke of, presents petitions against English Prayer Book in Scotland, 514
Lenthall, his answer to Charles the First, 528
Leo the Tenth, his election, 304, 305
his view of Luther, 314
Leopold, the Emperor, interferes against France, 780
Leofwine, son of Godwin, 76
Leslie, General, takes command of Scotch forces, 516
conduct at Dunbar, 559
taken prisoner at Worcester, 573
Lewes, battle of; *see* Battles
Lewis the Seventh of France, his struggle with Henry the Second, 102
Lewis, son of Philip Augustus, afterwards Lewis the Eighth, his invasion of England, 126
his retreat from England, 128
Lewis the Ninth, his decision about the Provisions of Oxford, 151
his influence on Edward the First, 178
Lewis the Fourteenth, his indignation at William of Orange's marriage, 635
his pensions to Charles the Second, *ib.*
effect on his position of the treaty of Nimeguen, *ib.*
his relations with James the Second, 651
his revocation of the Edict of Nantes, 651, 652
his character, 658
his policy, 659, 660
his war against the allies, 668, 669
his intrigues about the Spanish succession, 680—688
his treachery to William the Third, 688; *see* also Holland, William of Orange, Arlington, Dover, treaty of
Lewis the Fifteenth, the freedom of opinion in France under him, 773
Lewis the Sixteenth, convokes the States-General, 774
accepts the Constitution, 775
flies from Paris, 780
his imprisonment, 781
his death, 782
Lewis the Eighteenth, his flight from Paris, 809
Leyton, Commissioner of Monasteries, 333
Lilburne, John, 543, 557
Lilla saves Eadwine from a murderer, 19
Lilly, an Oxford scholar, 305
Limerick, siege of, 677
Linacre of Oxford, 298—301
Lincoln, in time of Romans, 5
Jews' houses at, 81
Stephen defeated at, 98
welcomes the Barons, 123
Lincoln, Bishop of, his relations with University of Oxford, 132
Lindisfarne, bishopric of, 22
desertion of it by Colman, 28
Cuthbert becomes its bishop, 33
its historical importance, 34
Lisle, Lady, executed, 651
Literature, English; *see* England, literature of
Literature, Welsh, in twelfth and thirteenth centuries, 155—157, 159, 160
Liverpool, Lord, his ministry, 804, 805
Livery companies; *see* Companies, Livery
Llewellyn of Wales, his alliance with Faukes de Breaute, 138
Llewellyn-ap-Jowerth, his struggles for independence, 159—162
Llewellyn-ap-Gruffydd, his struggles for independence, 159—162
Llywarch Hen; *see* Literature, Welsh
Locke, John, his political teaching, 603, 604
Lollardry, revival of, and its suppression, 216
meaning of name, 235
struggle of, 235, 236
later phases of, 251—253
protection of, by Richard the Second, 255
persecution of, by Henry the Fourth and Henry the Fifth, 258, 259
state of, in Henry the Sixth's reign, 267, 268
signs of its extinction, 275
persecution of, its effect on Henry the Sixth, 277
effect on of Oldcastle's execution, 342
Lothian becomes abode of Scotch kings, 53
London, its early commerce, 5
plundered by Danes, 42
relations of Normans and French to, 88, 89
shares in the religious revival of the twelfth century, 92
welcomes Stephen, 97, 98
supports him, 98
welcomes the Barons, 123
faithful to Protestantism on Mary's accession, 354
its sympathy with the Long Parliament, 526—529
London, John of, a pupil of Roger Bacon, 134
Londonderry, foundation of, 445
siege of, 672, 673
Longchamp, William, Bishop of Ely, makes an alliance between Otho and Richard, 109
Longland, William, his history, 248, 249
his poem, 249, 250
Lords, House of, weakened by suppression of mitred abbots, 341; *see* also Parliament
Louis Philippe, 814
Luddites, riots of, 812
Luneville, treaty of, 794
Luther, his change of attitude, 314
his relation to the Revival of Letters, 315
reception of his doctrines in England, *ib.*; *see* Leo, More
advises Tyndale to translate the Bible, 342
Ludlow, General, his share in the conquest of Ireland, 572
Luttrell, Colonel, 750
Lydgate, his character as a poet, 288
Lyly, his "Euphues," 392
Lyons, William, removed from court, 228
Lyttelton leaves Long Parliament, 530

MABINOGI, 156
Mackay, General, his struggle against Dundee, 670
Mackintosh, Sir James, his exclamation about the state of Europe under Buonaparte, 796
helps in *Edinburgh Review*, 806

Digitized by Google

Magdalene College; *see* Parker, Gifford, Hough, etc.
Maine submits to Duke William, 73
Major-Generals, Cromwell's, 557
Malcolm, his submission to William the First, 80
to Rufus, 87
Malger, Archbishop of Rouen, 73
Malpighi, helps to found vegetable physiology, 597
Malta, treatment of, by England, 795
Man conquered by Eadwine, 16
Manchester, its Toryism in 1745, 725
Manchester, Earl of, leads parliamentary forces, 553
Cromwell quarrels with, 556; *see* also Cromwell
Mandeville, Lord, a leader of the Presbyterians, 526
Manny, Walter de, 221, 222, 241
Mansel, a royal favourite of Henry the Third, 144
Mantes, burning of, by William the First, 85
Manton, his scheme of Protestant comprehension, 623
Mareschal, Earl William, his power on death of John, 126
Mareschal, Earl Richard, his resistance to Henry, 141
Margaret of Anjou, her marriage, 276
Marlborough, Duke of, his exploits in Ireland, 677
his plots against William the Third, 679
his early career and character, 688—690
his rise in power under Anne, 690, 691
wins Blenheim, 693, 694
the rest of his career, 695—700
his opinion of Walpole, 701
Marlborough, Duchess of, her influence over Anne, 683, 693
over her husband, *ib.*
Marlowe, 420, 421
Marmont, Marshal, 804
Marsh, Adam, his reputation as a scholar, 146
his relations to Grosseteste and de Montfort, 147
Marshall, a Presbyterian minister, 526
Marston, a successor of Shakspere, 425
Marston Moor; *see* Battles
Martin, Henry, 557, 564
Martin Marprelate, 460
Martin, a Papal legate driven from England, 141, 142
Martyrs; *see* Latimer, Taylor, Ridley, Cranmer, etc.
Martyr, Peter, burning of his bones, 361
Mary Tudor, set aside by Edward, 353
her marriage, 354
her courage at the insurrection, 355, 356
her policy, 356
discontent with her rule, 361
her death, 361
Mary Stuart, her birth, effects of, 373
her claims, *ib.*
her character, 375—377
her marriage and its effects, 378—380
her career in England, 381—384
her death, 407—409
Mary de Medicis, her position in France, 404
Mary, wife of William the Third, the hopes of Whigs from her, 657
Masham, Mrs., 700
Massachusetts, attacks on the liberty of, 753
Massena, Marshal, 801
Massinger contrasted with Ben Jonson, 428
Massey made Dean of Christ Church, 653, 654
Matilda of Flanders, her marriage, 73
dispute about it with the Pope, *ib.*
Matilda, wife of Henry the First, 87, 88
Maud, Henry's daughter, loved by him, 94
her struggle with Stephen, 68, 92
Maurice, Prince, his successes in Devonshire, 533
Maurilius takes the place of Malger as Archbishop of Rouen, 73
May, his account of the atrocities of the Irish, 524
*Mayflower*, the, its voyage, 492
Mayne, Cuthbert, execution of, 40
Mazarin, Cardinal, his alliance with Cromwell, 576
Medina Sidonia, leads the Armada, 410, 411
Melbourne, Lord, his ministry, 815
Mellitus, Bishop of London, 20
Melville, his treatment of James the First, 518
Mercia, colonization of, 15
Paganism of, 20
shakes off the overlordship of Northumbria, 20, 21
Chad's mission to, 24
its conquests in time of Penda, 23
effect on, of Theodore's arrangements, 30
great progress of, in later part of seventh century, 30—32
rise of, after fall of Northumbria, 34—36
power of, under Offa, 39, 40
its fall, 41, 42
victories over Danes under Æthelred, 49
its relations to Wales, 157, 158
Meres, Francis, "Wit's Treasury," 424
his opinion of Shakspere, 425
Methodists, the, 720, 721
Mexico, attack of France on, 818
Middleton, as successor of Shakspere, 425
Middle-English; *see* English, their settlements in Britain
Middlesex election; *see* Wilkes, Luttrell
Milton, John, his Puritanism, 451—459
his early career, 510
his first poems, 511, 512
his relation to Spinoza, *ib.*
his "Lycidas," 515
his sonnet on Massacre of Vaudois, 575
his career as illustrative of Puritanism, 582—584
"Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained," and "Samson Agonistes," 584—586
efforts for freedom of the Press, 647
Monasteries, rise of, in Northumbria, 25
Monks, attacks of Erasmus, Colet, Thomas Cromwell, More on, 333, 334
Monk, General, reduces the Highlands, 571
circumstances of his restoration of Charles the Second, 582
Monmouth, Duke of, brought forward by Shaftesbury, 641
his progress through the country, 643
his arrest, 645
his flight, 646

Digitized by Google

Monmouth, Duke of—*continued.*
his insurrection, defeat, and death, 649. 650
Moore, Sir John, his career in Portugal, 800
Montacute besieged, 78
Montagu, his sermons before Parliament, 481
Montagu, made Earl of Sandwich by Charles the Second, 605
Montagu, a member of Whig Junto, 682
becomes Chancellor of Exchequer, 683
his financial reforms, 683
driven from office, 685
Montaigne, point of similarity between him and Shakspere, 428
Montcalm, General, 736, 737
Monteagle, Lord, the letter to, 463
Montesquieu, his account of religious state of England, 717
his work in France, 773
Montfort, Simon de, his relations to the Roman Church, 144
the king's fear of him, 147, 148
his career in Gascony, 148, 149
his share in the Provisions of Oxford, 149, 150
his siege of Dover, 151
the rest of his career, 152—154
his admiration for Edward the First, 177
Montgomery, minister of William, 81
receives grants of manors, *ib.*
Montrose, Earl of, his desertion of the patriots, 524
organises a rising in favour of Charles the First, 534
defeated by Argyle, 540, 541
Moravians, Wesley's relations with, 720
More, Mrs. Hannah, her account of absence of Bibles in England, 717
effect of her writing, 721
More, Sir Thomas, his allusion to Vespucci, 297
his character, 300
his opinion of Colet's school, 305
his career, 308—310
his "Utopia," 310—313
his answer to Luther, 315, 316
his opinion of Wolsey, 319
as Chancellor, 326, 327
his attacks on the monks, 333
his death, 336, 337
influence of his doctrines, 601
Morkere of Northumbria, supports Edgar the Atheling, 77
reduced to submission by William, 78
Morrison, Robert, a botanist, 599
Mortimer, Roger, his career, 208
Mortimer, House of, its claims in the Lancastrian times, 261, 265
Moscow, retreat of, 804
Mountjoy, his rule in Ireland, 444
Mountmorris, his treatment by Wentworth, 501
Mowbray, Roger, rewarded by William the First with grants of lands, 81
Mowbray, Earl of Northumberland, captured by Rufus, 86
Murray, Earl of, leads the Lords of the Congregation, 378
made Regent, 380
Mutiny Act; *see* Statutes

NAPOLEON; *see* Buonaparte
Nelson, Admiral; *see* Battles, Villeneuve
Newcastle, Duke of, his ignorance of the intrigues of Austria and Russia, 726
his incapacity, 727
his corruption, 727, 728
his quarrel with Pitt, 742
Newton, Sir Isaac, his work, 599
Newton, the Evangelical, 721
Nimeguen, treaty of, 635
Nonconformists, effect on of the St. Bartholomew's Day of 1662, 609—611; *see* Presbyterians, Methodists, Quakers
Norfolk, Earl of, rebels against William the First, 84; *see* also Bigod, Earl
Norfolk, Duke of, his share in Henrythe Eighth's divorce, 326
arrests Thomas Cromwell, 348
his expectations from the Emperor, 349
Norfolk, Duke of, his treason against Elizabeth, 383, 384
Norfolk, Duke of, his answer to James the Second, 655
Normandy described, 67
civilization of, 68
condition of, under William, 73
conquest of, by Henry the Fifth, 262, 263
Normans, settlement of, in France, 67
conquests of, 70, 71
blending of, with England; *see* English
North, Lord, his protest against cruelties of James the Second, 649
North, Lord, in George the Third's time, his servility to the king, 749
stirred up by Clive to inquire into India, 758
his resignation, 761
its effect, 762
his coalition with Fox, 764; *see* also America, Boston, Massachusetts
Northallerton; *see* Battles
Northampton, treaty of, 208
Northampton, John of, 252
Northumberland, Earl of, in Henry the Fourth's reign, his rising and that of his son, 259
in Henry the Eighth's reign, rebels, 338
Northumberland, Duke of, his career, 352—354
Northumberland, Earl of, rebels against Elizabeth, 382
effect of her treatment of him, 384
Northumbria, establishment of a kingdom there, 15. 16
history of it till its conversion, 16—20
its fall, 34
its anarchy after its fall, 38, 39; *see* also Æthelfrith, Æthelbert, Eadwine, Cuthbert, Oswald, Oswi, Whitby, Bæda, Cædmon
Norwich, separate French colony in, 89
Nothelm, his assistance to Bæda, 38
Nottingham, Lord, his opposition to Marlborough, 695
Nottingham, peace of, 43, 44
Nowell, Dean, Elizabeth's treatment of him, 371
Noy, his revival of ship-money, 502

OATES, TITUS, his plot, 636—638
his pension, 675
O'Brien, Smith, his insurrection, 817

Digitized by Google

Occleve as a poet, 268
Ockham, William of, his rank as a schoolman, 147
his effect on Wyclif, 229
O'Connell, Daniel, his agitation for Catholic Emancipation, 814
effect of his violence, *ib.*
his "Repeal" agitation, 815
his arrest, 816
Oda, Archbishop, makes peace with Danelagh, 51
Odo of Bayeux left in charge of England, 77
his tyranny, 78
rewarded by a grant of manors, 81
rebels against William, 84
his arrest, *ib.*
rebels against Rufus, 85
Offa, king of Mercia, his rule, 39, 40
his relations with Charles the Great, 40, 41
Oglethorpe, General, founds Georgia, 730
Oldcastle, Sir John, 269
O'Neills, the, 442, 443
Orangemen, their cruelties in Ireland, 790, 791
Ordericus Vitalis, as an authority, 67, 70, 73
Orleans, Duke of, his intrigues in France, 269
Orleans, siege of; *see* Joan of Arc
Ormond invites Charles the First to Ireland, 555
made Duke and Steward by Charles the Second, 605
Orosius, translation of, by Ælfred, 48
Oswald, king of Northumbria, 21
calls missionaries into Northumbria, 22
effect of his victories, 23
Oswi, king of Northumbria, 24
effect of his victories, 23
presides at the Synod of Whitby, 28, 29
Otho, the Emperor, his alliance with John at Bouvines, 121
Otho, the Papal legate, 141, 142
Oxford, medical school of Jews at, 83
Matilda's escape from, 68
Oxford, University of, its early history, 127
lectures of Victorinus at, 128
description of its early appearance, 128—131
Normans and Gascons come to, after divisions at Paris, 132
Chancellor of, his position in the thirteenth century, 132
takes place of University of Paris, 229
Provisions of, 149—151
the centre of Lollardry, 235
degeneracy of learning at, in the fifteenth century, 268
its zeal for Charles the First, 531
Oxford, Earl of, Henry the Seventh's treatment of him, 276
Oxford, Earl of, Burleigh's son-in-law, turns Roman Catholic, 401

PADUA, importance of its University in the thirteenth century, 131
Paine, Thomas, Pitt's opinion of him, 784, 785
Palmerston, Lord, his career, 815, 816, 817, 818
Paris, University of, its importance in the thirteenth century, 128, 129, 131
Paris, University of—*continued.*
dissensions in, 132
its reputation transferred to Oxford, 229
treatment of, in Cranmer's canvass, 328
Paris, treaty of, 762
Paris, city of, rules France in 1792, 781
Parish, origin of, 30
Parker, Matthew, made Archbishop of Canterbury, 370
his object, 371
his effect on the clergy, 378
his enforcement of uniformity, 457, 458
Parker, the Roman Catholic President of Magdalene College, 654
Parliaments, rise of, 164, 167—171
position of, in time of Edward the Third, 224—226
attacks of, on the Pope, 229
decline of, under Lancastrians; *see* Commons, House of
claims of, to regulate succession after fall of Henry the Sixth, 275
importance of, under Edward the Fourth, 283
their relations with the Tudors, 303—307
their feeling about Protestantism, 354, 405
their struggle against James the First, 459—472, 476—478
their struggle against Charles the First; *see* Eliot, Pym, Hampden, Wentworth, &c.
"the Drunken Parliament" in Edinburgh, 619
reports of debates in them, 751, 752
of Ireland; *see* Ireland
Acts of; *see* Statutes
Parsons, the Jesuit, 401, 402
Paston, letters of, 268
Paterson suggests schemes of a national bank, 633
Patrick, his mission to Ireland, 21
"Patriots," the, oppose Walpole, 712
Paulinus goes to Northumbria, 19
his conversion of Eadwine, 20
his flight from Northumbria, 21
conquers land of West Saxons, 31
Peasantry, revolt of; *see* Tyler, Wat
condition of, in early times, 237, 238
first alterations in their condition, 239, 240
their struggle to attain a higher condition, 241
effect on them of Statutes of Labourers, 242
John Ball preaches to them; *see* Ball, John
subsequent struggles of, after Tyler's time, 250, 251
Peckham, Archbishop, his reputation as a scholar, 147
Peel, Sir Robert, supports the Wellington Ministry, 814
becomes Prime Minister, 815
his policy about free trade, 816
Pelhams, the, contrasted with Walpole, 712
Pelham, Henry, his rise, 722
his fall, 727
gives Pitt office, 729
Pencriche, Richard, a teacher in reign of Edward the Third, 212
Penda, his struggle against Northumbria, 20, 21, 23, 24
Penn, William, colonizes Pennsylvania, 738

Digitized by Google

Pepys, his account of the change of feeling towards Cromwell in England, 616
his opinion of Charles the Second, *ib.*
of the Triple Alliance, 624
of Shaftesbury, 629
Perceval, Spencer, becomes Prime Minister, 801
his resistance to America, 803
his death, 804
Perrers, Alice, her influence at court of Edward the Third, 227, 228
Perth, convention of, 204
Peterborough, abbey of, founded by Wulfere, 31
burnt by Danes, 44
Peters, Hugh, his justification of Pride's Purge, 554
Petition, Millenary, 464
of Right, 486, 487
Petitioners and abhorrers, 643
Petre, Father, called to Privy Council, 655
Petty, Sir William, an economist, 598
Pevensey, William lands at, 75
Philip Augustus, his relations with John, 109
his effect on Arthur's cause, 111
Philip the Second of Spain, his marriage ; *see* Mary
perceives hopelessness of persecution in England, 860
puzzled at Elizabeth's power, 363
Elizabeth's use of, 368
his character as a statesman, 403
Philips, Sir Robert, his speeches against Charles the First, 481
Picts, the, 6
their league with the Britons, 7
their defeat by the English, 8
Piers the Ploughman, vision of, 231 ; *see* also Longland
Pilgrimage of grace, 338
Pillnitz, conference of, 780
Pitt, William, the elder leads the "Boys," 714
his career in office, 727 - 732
effects of it, 737
effects of his assistance to Frederick, 740
George the Second's dislike of him, 741
his fall, 742
his refusal to return to office, 747
approves the resistance of America, 748 ; *see* also Chatham, Earl of
Pitt, William the younger, his first appearance in Parliament, 763
moves for Parliamentary reform, 763, 764
his struggle against the coalition, 765
his India Bill, 765
his treatment of Warren Hastings, 766, 767
compared with Walpole, 767
his answer to Fox about his policy towards France, 767
his financial policy, 768—770, 771
failure of his Bill for Parliamentary Reform, 770
his attitude about the slave trade, 772
about the regency, 774
about the French Revolution and about Prussia, 774, 775
his hopes from France, 777
his opposition to Burke, 778, 779
supports Fox's Libel Bill, 779
Pitt—*continued.*
defeats plots of the French emigrants, 780
struggles for peace, 782
his change of policy, 782
attempts to make peace with France, 785, 786
his relations with Ireland, 788—793
with the peerage, 791, 792
with the Roman Catholics, 793, 794
his resignation, 794
his death, 797, 798
Plagues in Charles the Second's time, 615 ; *see* also Black Death
Plantagenet, origin of the name, 97
Poggio, his view of English literature, 288
Poland, relation of, to Protestantism, 462
divisions of, 774, 775, 783
Pole, Michael de la, Earl of Suffolk, 254
Pole Reginald, his view of Henry the Eighth's character, 301
his advice to Wolsey, 328
made Cardinal, 339
Pollock, General, his Afghan expedition, 816
Poor ; *see* Statutes, Peasantry
Poor Law Reform, 815
Pope, claims of, on England, 82
attacks of Ockham and Wyclif on, 229—231
Porter, John, in Bonner's time, 447
Portsmouth, Duchess of, supports the exclusion Bill, 644
her presence at Charles the Second's death-bed, 649
Portreeve, his position in time of Henry the First, 89
Portugal, relations of, with Spain and England, 623
treatment of, at treaty of Fontainebleau, 799
Wellesley's opinion of, 800
Wellesley's campaign in, 800, 801
Præmunire, Statute of ; *see* Statutes
Pragmatic Sanction, 709
Prague, University of, Wyclif's writings brought to it ; *see* Wyclif
Presbyterianism, attitude of leaders of Long Parliament to it, 454, 455
treatment of, in Scotland by Laud, 507—510
growth of, 526
Presbyterians, their struggle against the Independents, 545—551
their relations with Usher, 608
effect of their expulsion from Church of England, 610
their attitude at time of Scotch Act of Union, 697
Press, liberty of, attacked by Grenville, 746
growth of its power, 751, 752
Pretender, the old, 706
Pretender, the young, 724, 725
Pride, Colonel, his purge, 553, 554
Prior, Matthew, his satires on the Allies, 699
Protestants ; *see* Lollardry, Latimer, Cromwell (Thomas), Cranmer
Elizabeth's attitude towards, 364, 366, 367, 369
growth of their position in Elizabeth's reign, 398, 399
growth of their clergy, 398
Provisors ; *see* Statutes

Digitized by Google

Protestantism, history of, during Elizabeth's reign, 462
Prussia, relations of, with England, 774, 775
rises against Napoleon, 837; *see* also Frederick the Second
Prynne, his "Histrio-mastrix," 512
his trial and punishment, 514
Pulteney leads opposition to Walpole, 712
becomes Earl of Bath, 722
Puritans, their first settlement in America, 440
their ideal, 528, 583
their wish for uniformity of belief, 610
their influence on the United States, 711
Puritanism, its effect on England, 328
its growth in Elizabethan times, 427
hatred of its professors for the stage, 427
its effect on the people, 443–454
distinct from Presbyterianism, 454, 455; *see* also Laud
fall of, 550–556
causes of its fall, 550, 551
its effect on the history of England, 772
Pym, his feelings towards Episcopacy, 454
his first election, 471
his speech about the Petition of Right, 487
his character and position, 519, 520
brings in the Grand Remonstrance, 525, 529
his views on Church Reform, 526
attempted arrest of, 527
his attitude after Charles the First's attempt to arrest five members, 529
determines to ally the Long Parliament with Scotland, 533
his last plans, 534–536
effect of his death on Cromwell's position, 536
his body taken from the grave, 603
his influence on Finance, 711

QUADRUPLE ALLIANCE, the, 708
Quakers, the, protected by Cromwell, 575
their assertion of freedom of belief, 610
special persecution of them, 612
Quo warranto, writs of, 197

RADBOD, King of Frisia, 37
Rædwald, King of East Anglia, 17
his inconsistency in religion, 19
his opposition to Christianity, 20
Rahere builds St. Bartholomew's priory, 92
Raikes, his Sunday Schools, 721
Raleigh, Sir Walter, "History of the World," 391
his account of Spenser, 414
failure of his last expedition, 475
his discovery of Virginia, tobacco, and potatoes, 491
Ray, John, his scientific works, 599
Reform of Parliament; *see* Commons, House of
Reformation, its effect in separating off the English Church from others, 610
Remonstrance, the Short, 487, 489, 490
the Grand, 525, 526
Repyngdon, his sermons, 235
Reresby, his opinion of Charles the Second, 641
Reynolds, Sir Joshua, his friendship for Burke, 775
Rich, Edmund, story of, 130, 131
his support of the Earl Mareschal, 141
Richborough, fortress of, 8
Richard the First of England, his character, 109
his policy, 109, 110
his treatment of Scotland, 181
Richard the Second, effect of his accession, 243
his attitude in Tyler's insurrection, 254
after it, 247
takes power into his own hands, 254, 255
effects of his policy, 255, 556
his fall, 256, 257
his treatment of Ireland, 434
Richard the Third, his seizure of the throne, 293
his policy, 293, 294
his death, 295
Richard the Fearless, Duke of Normandy, 68
Richardson, Chief Justice, Laud's quarrel with, 496
Richelieu, effects of his policy, 657, 658
Richmond, Duke of, his advocacy of Universal Suffrage, 779
Ridley, his execution, 350
Rivers, Lord, his literary ability, 292
Rizzio, his career, 378
Robert Guiscard, 70
Robert, Duke of Normandy, 71
his pilgrimage, 71
Robert, son of William the First, rebels against his father, 85
Normandy bequeathed to, 85
continual rebellion in his name against Rufus, 85
sells Normandy to Rufus, 87
goes to Crusades, 87
his return, 87
heads a rebellion against Henry the First, 92
Robert of Belesme rebels against Henry the First, 92
Robespierre, Maximilian, opposes war, 780
his fall, 784
Robinson, John, the Separatist, 459
his voyage, 492
Rochelle, fall of, 487, 488
Rochester, siege of, by William Rufus, 86
Rochester, Lord, his profligate poems, 589
Rochester, Bishopric of, what it represented, 29
Rockingham, Lord, inclines to Pitt, 745
his ministry, 747
his dislike of Parliamentary Reform, 751
makes peace, 763
his death, 764
effect of his reforms, 765
Rodney, Admiral, effect of his victory, 761
Roger de Toesny, a Norman leader, 70, 72
Roger of Hoveden as a chronicler, 114
Roger, Guiscard's brother, 70
Rogers, execution of, 358
Rohese, mother of Becket, 100
Rolf the Ganger, his conquests in France, 67
Rome, relations of, with Britain, 5, 6
influence of, in Church, 28–33
Romney secured by William the Conqueror, 78

Digitized by Google

Romsey, Matilda educated in nunnery at, 87
Rookwood, Elizabeth, treatment of, 400
Rossbach, battle of; *see* Battles
Rousseau expresses moral conceptions of his time, 773
Royal Society founded, 598
Rudyard, Sir Benjamin, his hopes from Charles the First, 480
"Rump," the; *see* Commonwealth, Cromwell, Vane, Martin
Rupert, Prince, his exploits in the civil wars, 531, 533, 535
his flight after Marston Moor, 535
his conduct at Naseby, 541
Russell, family of, rise of, from the spoil of the monasteries, 342
Russell, Lord, helps to head the country party, 627
Russell, William, Lord, his support of Shaftesbury in the Exclusion Bill, 641
his trial and execution, 646
Russell, Admiral, his intrigues with James the Second, 679
his defeat of the French at La Hogue, 679, 680
made Secretary of the Admiralty, 683
Russell, Lord John, his first ministry, 816, 817
his second ministry, 818
his desire for reform of Parliament, 819
Russia, rise of, under Catherine the Second, 774
England's war with, 817
Rygge, Chancellor of Oxford, 235
Ryswick, Peace of, 634

Sacheverell, Dr., 700
Sackville, his "Gorboduc," 418, 419
Salisbury, John of, his holiness of life, 92
his fame at Paris, 129
Salisbury, Roger of, his arrest by Stephens, 98
Salisbury, Earl of, a leader of Lollards, 256
his death, 259
Salisbury, Countess of, her death, 325
Saint; *see* St.
Sancroft, Archbishop, protests against Declaration of Indulgence, 656
San Domingo, taking of, 576
Sarsfield, General, in Ireland, 677
Sautre, William, his execution, 258, 259
Savile, Sir John, his rivalry with Wentworth, 504
Saville, Sir Henry, his dying speech, 478
Savoy, Duke of, treatment of, by Cromwell, 575
Saye and Sele, Lord, a leader of the Presbyterians, 526
made Lord Privy Seal, 605
Sawtre; *see* Sautre
Saxons, their settlement in England, 2
Saxons, East and West, their colonies, 14; *see* also East Saxons, Essex, Wessex
Saxons, South, their kingdoms, 10
Schomberg, General, in Ireland, 677
Scinde, annexation of, 816
Scots, King of, invested with fief of Cumberland, 52
Scots, the, absorbed by English, 53
Scotland, its treatment by William the First, 85
struggles of, against England up to time of Wallace, 178—187
Scotland—*continued*.
its state at accession of Elizabeth, 372—374
its treatment by Laud, 507—510
effect on it of Charles the Second's policy, 619
its treatment by James the Second, 652, 653
union of, with England, 696, 697
Scrope, Archbishop of York, his insurrection and death, 259
Sedley, Sir Charles, 589
Separatists, the, 458—460
September, Massacres of, 781, 782
Serf; *see* Peasantry
Seringapatam, capture of, 786
Shaftesbury, Lord, his taunts against the queen, 619
his discovery of Charles's perfidy, 628
his policy at court, 628—630
causes of his being driven from office, 630, 631
his subsequent policy, 631, 632
his first sketch of the Exclusion Bill, 632
sent to the Tower by Dandy, 634
takes up the Popish Plot, 636-638
is made Lord Treasurer after Danby's fall, 638
his championship of Monmouth, 641
his second dismissal from office, 641
his later policy, 641—645
his Bill of Divorce, 643
his flight and death, 646
Shakspere, highest type of Elizabethan literature, 399, 413
scantiness of information about him, 421, 422
his "Venus and Adonis," 423
his dramas, 423—428
his sympathy with the insurrection of Essex, 426
George the Third's opinion of him, 741
Shane O'Neill, 442, 443
Shaxton, made Bishop of Salisbury, 345
his imprisonment, 347
Shelburne, Lord, leads the Chatham party, 763
his ministry, 764
Sheldon, Archbishop, encourages buffoonery, 589
Sherburne, Ealhstan, Bishop of, 43
Sheridan, Richard Brinsley, his view of Napoleon's invasion of Spain, 800
Sheriffs, office of, 169
Shippen, his opinion of Walpole, 702
Ship-money, 502, 503
Shire, Knights of, institution of, 169—171
their union with the burgesses, 225
Shrewsbury, foundation of, 39
the Norman castle at, 78
Shrewsbury, Earl of, intrigues with James the Second, 679
becomes Secretary of State, 683
Sidney, Sir Philip, his character, 392, 393
his relations with Spenser, 414
Sidney, Sir Henry, his government of Ireland, 442
Sidney, Algernon, his inclination to the Independents, 546
his trial and death, 646
Sikhs, risings of, 816, 817

Digitized by Google

Simeon of Durham, as an authority, 78, 113
Skelton, his poetry, 370
Slavery in Early England, 83
efforts of Church against, 84
trade in, abolished at Bristol, 55
prohibited by William, 105
abolished by Act of Parliament, 815; *see* Wilberforce, Statutes
Sleswick, its relations with Early England, 1
Smith, John, discovers Bay of Chesapeake, 421
Smith, Adam, his "Wealth of Nations," 769
Smith, Sir Sidney, defeats Bonaparte at Acre, 797
Snowdon, Lords of, 153
Socinianism, its growth in Poland, 462
Socinians excluded from the Parliament of 1707, 574
Sophia, Electress of Hanover, declared successor to the throne, 603
Somers, Lord, chosen President of a Royal Society, 579
a member of the Whig Junto, 622
becomes Lord Keeper, 623
effects the union between England and Scotland, 627
becomes President of the Council, 638
Somersetshire, insurrection in, against the Normans, 73
Somerset, Duke of, in Henry the Sixth's reign, 276
Somerset the Protector, his accession to power, 353
his fall, 551
Somerset, Earl of, his answer to James the Second, 625
Somerville tries to murder Elizabeth, 468
Soult, Marshal, 1, 2, 7
Southampton, Earl of, his relations with Shakspeare, 425
with the Earl of Essex, 426
Southampton, Earl of, in James the Second's time, becomes Lord Treasurer, 605
South Saxons; *see* Saxons, South
South-Sea Bubble, 708
Southumbrians, the, 15
Southwark burnt by William the First, 77
Spain, its position in Europe in Elizabeth's reign, 403—405
relations between it and England after the Armada, 430, 431
James the First's policy towards, 474, 475
war between it and England in George the Second's time, 713
its treatment by Bonaparte, 799, 800
invasion of, by Wellesley, 800, 801; *see* also Philip the Second
Speed, his chronicles, 391
Spenser, Elizabeth's favour to, 362, 366
his work and life, 413—417
his use of the Bible, 448
his influence on Milton, 511
Stafford, Lord, his execution, 644
Stair, Master of; *see* Glencoe, Massacre of
St. Albans, chronicle of, 288
Stamp Act, the, 746—748
Stanhope, Lord, First Lord of the Treasury, cause of his death, 708
Star-Chamber for Jews in William the First's time, 83
Charles the First's use of, 501, 502
Statutes, Petition of Commons, how converted into them, 229
of Appeals, 320, 330
Bill of Rights, 632
Board of Control, Indian; *see* Pitt
Boston Port Act; *see* Boston
Conventicle Act, 611, 612
Five Mile Act, 611, 612
Habeas Corpus Act, 637, 643
Heresies, 250, 251, 352—360
Kilkenny, 434
Labourers, 242, 243; *see* also Peasantry
Libel Act, Fox's; *see* Fox, Charles James
Merchants, 166
Monopolies, abolition of, 397
Mortmain, 169
Municipal ties, Reform of, 815
Mutiny Act, 673, 674
Poor Laws, 524—526, 815
Præmunire, 227
Proclamations, Royal, 350
Provisors, 229
Quia Emptores, 166
Reform Act, 814
Regulation Act, Indian, 758
Schism Act, 703
Septennial Act, 707
Six Articles Act, 349, 350
Slave trade, abolition of, 798
Slavery, abolition of, 815
Stamp Act, 746
Test Act, 401, 609, 627, 674
Toleration Act, 674
Treasons Act, 705
Triennial Act, 674
of Uniformity in Edward the Sixth's reign, 350
in Elizabeth's reign, 371
in Charles the Second's reign, 609
of Winchester, 166
St. Bartholomew, Massacre of, 404
in 1662; *see* Bartholomew, St.
Stephen, King, his birth and education, 97
silences Vacarius, 128
Stewart, Dugald, his estimate of Bacon, 595
St. Frideswide, the priory of, at Oxford, 128
St. Gall, monastery of, 21, 22
St. George, Church of the canons of, at Oxford, 129
Stigand, Archbishop, 66
his deposition, 82
Stillingfleet, his schemes of Protestant comprehension, 623
his pamphlets against superstition, 653
Stirling, battle of; *see* Battles
St. John the lawyer, his comment on affairs in 1642, 517
despatched to Holland by the Commonwealth, 560
St. John, Henry; *see* Bolingbroke, Lord
Stokes, Peter, his attacks on the Lollards, 235
Stowe, his chronicles, 391
St. Paul's, churchyard of, when built, 92
St. Paul's, meeting at, of Barons, 122
Dean of, dies of fright, 199
Strafford; *see* Wentworth
Straw, Jack, his position in Tyler's insurrection, 244
Strickland, Elizabeth's order to, 396

Digitized by Google

Strode, his view of the relations between Long Parliament and the Scotch, 521
his attempted arrest, 527
Strong-bow ; *see* Ireland, conquest of
St. Ruth, General, 677
Stuart, early line of, 372, 373 ; *see* also Mary, James the First, etc.
Suchet, Marshal, 802
Sudbury, Simon de, his murder approved by Hereford, 233
advises the king to resist the insurgents, 245
his death, *ib.*
Suffolk, Earl of, in Henry the Sixth's reign, 274 ; *see* also Pole, Michael de la
Sunderland, Lord, truckles to Duke of York, 645
threatens to swamp House of Lords, 655
his policy, 684
invents a "Cabinet," 682
sent to Vienna, 695
dismissed, 700
Surajah Dowlah, 734
Sussex, Earl of, his opinion of prevalent state of religion in north, 382
his treatment of Shane O Neill, 443
Swegen, Danish leader, invades England, 57
conquers England, 58
Swegen, King of Denmark, his invasion of England, 78
Swegen, son of Godwine, Earl of Mercia, 65
Swend, his project and death, 60
Swift, Jonathan, his pamphlet against the Allies, 699
Swithun, bishop of Winchester, 43

TACITUS, his account of the Germans, 3
Taillefer the minstrel, 76
Talavera ; *see* Battles
Tallard, his assistance to the Allies, 693, 694
Talleyrand, his desire for war between France and Prussia, 809
Tamar becomes the English frontier, 41
Taunton, origin of, 34, 35
Taylor, Rowland, his execution, 357, 358
Taylor, Jeremy, his "Liberty of Prophecying," 601
Tenchebray, battle of, 93
Temple, Sir William, makes the Triple Alliance, 625, 626
wishes to strengthen the Royal Council, 639
his difference from Shaftesbury about Monmouth, 641
his advice to Charles on the occasion, *ib.*
supports the Exclusion Bill, 643
Temple, Lord, his refusal of office, 747, 748
Test Act ; *see* Statutes
Thanet assigned to England, 7, 8
Thegn, origin of, 55
Thelwall, trial of, 785
Theobald of Canterbury, his holiness of life, 92
a moral leader, 99
Theodore of Tarsus dispatched to England, 29
his organisation of the Church, 29, 30
negotiates a peace, 34
Thistlewood ; *see* Cato Street Conspiracy
Thurstan, Archbishop of York, resists the Scots, 99
Tillotson, Archbishop, his scheme of Protestant comprehension, 623
writes pamphlets against superstition, 653
Tilsit, Peace of, 799
Tippoo Sahib, his struggle with the English, 786, 794
Toleration Act, *see* Statutes
Tooke, Horne ; *see* Horne Tooke
"Tories," origin of the party, 643
their change of policy on the accession of George the Third, 741
their support of the younger Pitt, 767
govern England after war with France, 799
Tortulf the Forester, 95
Tostig, son of Godwine, driven to Flanders, 66
invades England with Harold Hardrada, 75
defeated at Stamford Bridge ; *see* Battles
Tournaments introduced by Edward the First, 177
occasions for vice under Edward the Third, 231
Tourville, Admiral, 679, 680
Towns, causes of their early wealth and importance, 89
their struggles for self-government, *ib.*
Townshend, his fall, 714
Tresham ; *see* Gunpowder Plot
Triennial Act ; *see* Statutes
Triers, Cromwell's Board of, 573
Troyes, Treaty of, 263, 264
Trumwine, Bishop of Whithern, 33
his flight, 33
Trussel, Sir William, his address to Edward the Second on his deposition, 204
Tunstall, Cuthbert, studies at Padua, 304
Turgot, his position as an annalist, 113
motives and character of his policy, 768
Turkey, alliance on behalf of, between England, Holland, and Prussia, 775
saved from France by Convention of Cairo, 795
revolt of Greeks against, 813, 814
Tyler, Wat, effect of his rising on Wyclif, 233
details of his rising, 243—247
Tyndale, his version of the Bible suppressed by Henry the Eighth, 327 : *see* also Coverdale
revives Lollardry, 342
translates the Bible, 342, 343
effect of his work, 343, 447
Tyrconnell, Lord, his rule in Ireland, 663
his struggle against William the Third, 671, 672

ULSTER, colonisation of, its effects, 572
Universities, rise of, 127 ; *see* also Oxford, Cambridge, Paris, Cranmer
attitude of, towards William after the Peasants' Revolt, 251
United States ; *see* America, United States of
Uriconium, the burning of, 14
Usher, Archbishop, insulted by Strafford, 500
his scheme of Church government, 608
Utrecht, peace of, 702, 703
the support of it by the Whigs, 707
its gain to England, 708

VACARIUS, his lectures at Oxford, 128
Van Artevelde, effect of his death, 219

Digitized by Google

Vane, Sir Henry, the elder, 569
Vane, Sir Harry, the younger, lands in New England, 477
leads the Independents, 526
helps to form the league with Scotland, 533 571
his opposition to the Presbyterians, 546
his reorganization of the navy, 555
urges on the Reform Bill, 561, 563
Cromwell's taunt to, 564
offered a seat in the Council of State, 565
opposes Richard Cromwell, 581
defeat of his efforts in Richard Cromwell's Parliament, 581
exempted from the indemnity, 607
his trial and execution, 608
Vere, Sir Horace, leader of volunteers, 476
Verney, Sir Edmund, his feelings to Charles the First, 525
Vernon, Admiral, 714, 715
Vervins, treaty of, between France and Spain, 431
Vespucci, Amerigo, his travels, 297
Victoria, Queen, accession of, 816
Villars, his battles, 693--695
Villeinage dies out after Tyler's rising, 250, 251 ; *see* also Peasantry
Villeneuve, Admiral, his struggle with Nelson, 797
Virgil, study of his works revived in the thirteenth century, 128
Virginia, discovery of, 491, 492
its aristocratic character, 738
Washington's influence in, 753
Voltaire, character and effect of his work, 773

Wace, poem of, 70
Walcheren, expedition to, 801
Wales, reduction of, by William the First, 85
share of, in the Barons' War, 154
literature of ; *see* Literature
its relations to England, 158—160
conquest of, by Edward the First, 163 ; *see* Welsh
Wallace, William, his career, 185—187
Waller, Sir William, defeated by the Cornishmen, 592
Wallingford, treaty of, 100
Wallington, John, his brother, 451
Wallis, Dr., 598
Walpole, Sir Robert, his rise, 701, 702
his foreign policy, 703
his dislike of reform, 705
warns the House against the South Sea Bubble, 708
his foreign policy, 708—709
his Finance, 710, 711
his fall, 714, 715
policy in House of Lords, 722
his rejection of a plan of taxing America, 39
suspends Convocation, 716
his drunkenness, 717
compared with Pitt, 767, 771
Walpole, Horace, his admiration for Whitfield, 718
his account of Pitt's management of corruption, 728
his account of Pitt's popularity, 729
his account of the victories in Canada, 737
Walsingham, of St. Alban's, history of, 288
Walsingham, in Elizabeth's reign, his opinion of Elizabeth, 360
Walter de Map, his romances, 115, 116
his satires, *ib.*
Walworth, William, kills Tyler, 246
Ward, Dr., a mathematician, 598
Wareham, Danes appear before, 46
Warham, Archbishop, his life, 300
kindness to Erasmus, 301
his attitude towards New Learning, 304—306
his sympathy with Erasmus's studies, 307
his view of Wolsey's taxes, 319
submits Henry's claim to Convocation, 329
dies, 330
his view of the monks, 333
Warrenne, Earl of Surrey, as Regent of Scotland, 184, 185
his resistance to Edward the First, 197
Warwick, Earl of, in Edward the Second's time, his relations with Gaveston, 201, 202
Warwick, Earl of (King-maker), wins Battle of St. Alban's, 278
his position and career, 279—281
Warwick, Dudley, Earl of ; *see* Northumberland, Duke of
Warwick, Rich., Earl of, in Charles the First's time, buys Connecticut, 499
named Admiral of the Fleet, 530
Washington, George, his influence in Virginia, 753
deplores the attack on the tea-ships, 753
his character and position, 754, 755
Watt, his steam-engine, 769
its effects, 805
Webster contrasted with Ben Jonson, 428
Wedmore, peace of, 45, 46
Wellesley, Lord, his devotion to Pitt, 767
becomes Foreign Secretary, 801
Wellington, Duke of, his successes in Portugal and Spain, 800—804, 807 ; *see* Battles
character of his army at Waterloo, 809, 810
refuses to serve under Canning, 813
forms a Tory Ministry, 814
accepts Catholic Emancipation, *ib.*
Welsh, for early history *see* Britons
join Mercians against Northumbria, 19
oppressed by Normans, 78
Wentworth, Peter, Elizabeth's treatment of, 396, 397
Wentworth, Thomas, his first election, 471
made sheriff of a county, 482
his declaration on the Petition of Right, 486
his defence of that Petition, 504
his early career, *ib.*
his devotion to the court, *ib.*
his "Thorough," *ib.*
his rule in Ireland, 505—507
his suggestions as to methods of government in England, 513
his opinion of Hampden, 515
made Earl of Strafford, 516
his return from Ireland, 517
his attitude in the Scotch War, 517, 518
the hatred against him, 521, 522
his trial and execution, 522, 523

Digitized by Google

Wesley, Charles, his hymns, 719
Wesley, John, his early career, 719, 720
his differences from Whitfield, 720
effect of their teaching in promoting the abolition of slave-trade, 772
Wessex, first colonization of, 14
its reconversion, 23
submits to Northumbria, 30
rises again under Ini; *see* Ini
its power broken by the Danes, 42
rises against them, 44
reforms in; *see* Ælfred
Westminster Confession, 544
Westmoreland, Earl of, rises against Elizabeth, 382
Weston, a favourite of Buckingham, 488
his administration as Treasurer, 500, 501
Westphalia, Peace of, its effects, 657
Wexford, massacre of, 558
Wharton, Lord, presents a petition for peace with Scotland, 517
a member of Whig Junto, 682
Whewell, Dr., his opinion of Roger Bacon, 136
Whigs, their origin, 643
their aims at the Revolution, 675, 676
their power, 682
their war policy, 690
their clause in the Act of Union with Scotland, 696, 699, 700
their impeachment of Sacheverell, 700
their triumph under Walpole, 704
their submission to their leaders, 705
their opposition to the younger Pitt's scheme of reform, 764
defeated by Pitt, 767
their opposition to Pitt's financial policy, 771
their support of Fox at first in his approval of French Revolution, 777
but subsequently leave him, 783; *see* also Fox
join Tories against Buonaparte, 796
their later reforms, 814, 815
Whitby, its monastery founded by Hild, 626
Synod of, 27—29
the cowherd of; *see* Cœdmon
Whitelock, his views of the arrest of the five members, 528
Whitfield, his preaching, 718, 719
Whitgift, his compulsion about the Articles, 458
Whithern, see of, 29
Wiclif; *see* Wyclif
Wiglaf, King of Mercia, 41
Wilberforce, William, sympathy of Methodists with him, 721
his account of Pitt's feeling when defeated in Parliament, 770
brings in his Bill against the Slave Trade, 772
his account of the cause of Pitt's death, 797
Wilfrith of York, his life, 28
his contest with Colman; *see* Colman
Wilkes, John, denounced by the elder Pitt, 729
prosecuted, 746
expelled from the House of Commons, and returned to it again, 750
Wilkes—*continued.*
elected alderman of London, 750
effect of his career, 751
the abuses which made him advocate parliamentary reform, 770
Wilkins, Dr, 598, 599
William of Malmesbury, 33, 78
William of Newborough, 114
William of Jumièges, 67, 70
William Longsword, Duke of Normandy, 68
William of Poitiers, his "Gesta Willelmi," 70
William the Conqueror, his parentage and struggles with his subjects, 71
his character, 71, 72
his struggle with the Angevins, *ib.*
his struggle with France, *ib.*
his rule in Normandy, 73
he makes Lanfranc his minister, 74
his visit to England, *ib.*
he wins battle of Senlac, 75, 76
his conquest of England, 77—80
lays waste the north, 79
introduces feudalism, 80
his struggle with the Baronage, 81
his relations with the Church, 82
his position as a landowner, 83
character of his rule, 84, 85
he abolishes capital punishment, 85
his relations with Scotland and Wales, *ib.*
his death, *ib.*
William Rufus gains the crown, 85
his rule, 86
his military prowess, 87
his death, *ib.*
William, son of Henry the First, his death, 94
William, son of Robert, heir of Henry the First, *ib.*
William of Champeaux, his lectures, 129
William, the Lion of Scotland, his relations with England, 181
William Longbeard, 193, 194
William of Wykeham, 227, 228
William of Orange, the Silent, Elizabeth's relations with him, 368, 404, 405
William of Orange, afterwards William the Third of England, leads the Dutch against Lewis the Fourteenth, 626
Shaftesbury's intrigues with him, 632
effect of his defeat, 634
married to Mary, 634
his education, 660, 661
his policy, 661, 662
his attitude towards James the Second, 662, 663
invited to England, 663, 664
his landing, 665, 666
becomes William the Third of England, 667, 668
his treatment of Scotland, 669, 670
effect of his accession on theory of Divine Right, 673
his complaint of his treatment by Parliament, *ib.*
his conquest of Ireland, 678—680
changes introduced into the form of government by his accession; *see* Sunderland Cabinet
his foreign policy, 685, 686
betrayed by Lewis, 686—688
his illness and death, 687—690

Digitized by Google

William the Fourth, his accession, 514
  favours reform of Parliament, *ib.*
Williams, Roger, expelled from Massachusetts, 442
Williams, Bishop, his scheme of Church Reform, 509
  his protest, 527
Wills, Dr. investigates the brain, 511
Winchelsey, Archbishop, opposes Edward the First, 200
Windebank, his flight from England, 521
Winfrith; *see* Boniface
Winthrop, John, in New England, 442, 448
  his opinion of Long Parliament, 521
Witenagemote, its origin, 30
  loses its popular character, 56
Wither, George, his satires, 511
Wolfe, General, 736, 737
Wolsey, Thomas, his foreign policy, 305
  his rise into power, 316, 317
  his home policy, 317, 318
  his relations with Parliament, 318, 319
  his attitude about the king's divorce, 321, 322
  his fall, 323, 324
  his use of the king's council, 501
Woodward founds the science of mineralogy, 599
Worcester, Earl of, 292
Worcester, battle of; *see* Battles
Wrangholm, birthplace of Cuthbert, 24
Wulfhere, son of Penda, 24
  his rule, 30, 31
Wulfstan sent out to Esthonia by Ælfred, 48
Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester defeats rebels, 63
Wycherley, his dramas, 569, 570
Wyclif, his writings brought to Prague, 131
  his early life, obscurity of, 208
  his relation with Oxford and the schoolmen, 222, 229
  his attack on the Papacy, 229, 230
  his alliance with John of Gaunt, 231–233
  effect on his work of Tyler's rising, 235
  his attack on Transubstantiation, 234
  his writings generally, 234, 235
  his followers, 235, 236
  his death, 236, 237
Wyndham, William, refuses to take office without Fox, 747
Wynter, Admiral, his attack on Scotland, 374

York, in the time of the Romans, 5
  capital of Roman Britain, 15
  centre of English politics for a time, 84
York, Richard, Duke of, rebels against Henry the Sixth, 276, 277
  convenes Parliament, 278
  his death, *ib.*
York, James, Duke of, suspected by the House of Commons, 627
  resigns his admiralship, 627
  returns in triumph after defeat of Exclusion Bill, 645; *see* also Exclusion Bill, Shaftesbury, Earl of, James the Second
Young, Arthur, effect of his work on agriculture, 769

THE END.

LONDON: R. CLAY, SONS, AND TAYLOR, PRINTERS, BREAD STREET HILL.

Digitized by Google

272

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google